

A
K E Y
T O T H E
PILGRIM'S PROGRESS,

DESIGNED

TO ASSIST THE ADMIRERS OF THAT EX-
CELLENT BOOK TO READ IT WITH UNDER-
STANDING AND PROFIT, AS WELL AS
PLEASING ENTERTAINMENT.

I N A
SERIES OF LETTERS
T O A
F R I E N D.

BY ANDRONICUS. *K*

And his Disciples asked him, saying, What might this Parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, Luke viii. 9, 10.

My dark and cloudy Words, they do but hold
The Truth, as Cabinets enclose the Gold.

BUNYAN.

L O N D O N:

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Country.

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P R E F A C E.

MR. BUNYAN, in his excellent Apology prefixed to his Pilgrim, has fully vindicated the Metaphorical Mode of conveying Instruction: his Authorities are indubitable—his Arguments clear and conclusive—and the End he proposes, highly valuable and important: that is, that the Instructions of Truth may be received with Pleasure, and retained with an almost Impossibility of Forgetfulness, through the deep Impression which Metaphor makes upon the Memory: he says,

" Art thou for something rare and profitable ?
 " Or wouldst thou see a Truth within a Fable ?
 " Art thou forgetful ? or wouldst thou remember
 " From *New-Year's-Day* to the last of December ?
 " Then read my Fancies, they will stick like Burs."

This highly valuable and important
 End, is not likely to be answered in
 any great Degree, unless the Fable be
 well understood. Mr. BUNYAN was
 well aware of this, and being earnest-
 ly desirous to *be* fully understood, thus
 addresses and counsels his Readers, in
 his admirable Conclusion of his Book,

" Now, Reader, I have told my Dream to thee,
 " See if thou canst interpret it to me,
 " Or to thyself, or Neighbour ———
 " Put by the Curtains, look within my Veil,
 " Turn up my Metaphors, and do not fail :
 " There if thou seekest them, such Things thou'lt find
 " As will be helpful to an honest Mind."

The Allegory often alludes to the
 Times in which the Author lived, and
 those which preceded it : also to the
 Maxims, Manners, Prejudices, and

Big-

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v.

Bigotry of those Times, and the Sufferings of godly consciencious Persons from these Sources. Readers who lived in, or soon after the Author's Day, could much better understand such Parts of his Allegory, than modern Readers can; unless it be those who have read and studied the History of those Times alluded to: to those who have not had these Advantage, it may be pleasing and profitable to be able to enter into the Author's Meanings.

Many Parts of the Allegory, which have no such Allusion, are, however just, very dark and mysterious; therefore difficult to understand, except by Persons who were used to the Author's Ministry, or who have studied his other Writings; by which Means, obtaining a Knowledge of his Mode of thinking, when he spoke or wrote without Metaphor, they became bet-

ter qualified than others to enter into his Similitudes.

Let it be further observed, that the System of Christianity alluded to throughout the Allegory, is the Calvinistic, or as it is denominated in the present Day, Evangelic: and the Modes of Religion alluded to, are those of Nonconformity. Persons unacquainted with the above System of Doctrine, or Modes of Practice, must blunder exceedingly in attempting to explain the Author's Meaning.

But the greatest and most important Bar to the Understanding of this Allegory, is, that the greater Part of it relates to Christian Experience, under different Dispensations of Providence, and in different Situations of Mind. Shewing how the LORD, by his Spirit, instructs, leads, and guides his People; supports and delivers them
in

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in all that variety of Changes which pass over them, which, from whatever Cause they spring, must work for their good, and produce their Encrease in the Growth of those Graces which constitute that *Holiness without which no Man shall see the LORD*. Weak Christians must frequently be at a Loss to get at the Author's Meaning: and as to those who are Strangers to God and themselves; the Whole must appear an ingenious entertaining Something, to which they can fix no Meaning.

A Key that will unlock the Mystery of this entertaining Book, and open all its Instructions to every Class of Readers; must be considered as a desirable Object: for 'tis a Pity that serious godly Persons, who read the Book for Instruction, should miss any Portion which our Author de-

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signs to give them: and it is equally a Pity that those who read it only as an entertaining Tale should be suffered to lay it down, without an Opportunity being offered them of Profit, as well as Pleasure. Such a Key is attempted in the following Sheets: how far the Writer has succeeded, he leaves others to judge; he has done what he could, and as God works by Means, and it is *our* Duty to use probable Means in promoting the best Interests of Men, he hopes that his Endeavours will not be in vain. If the Pilgrim has been an edifying Companion, even while he puzzled his Readers, may we not hope he will be more so, when more plainly understood.

The Editions the Pilgrim's Progress has passed through, are very numerous, all of them furnished with
very

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very brief Notes ; and a few Texts of Scripture in the Margin, which give a little Assistance to the Reader, yet so little as leaves him almost where they find him.

In the Year 1776, an Edition was published with brief Notes to illustrate the more difficult Passages of the Pilgrim's Progress ; these Notes are of considerable Use and Help to the Reader, and the Author of them deserves Praise and Thanks for his pious Labour of Love : they do not however preclude the Necessity, and Usefulness of an Attempt to explain the Allegory more fully. That Annotator *does not pretend to be positive that he has always taken up the Thought the Author had upon his Mind at the Time of Writing, though he thinks there are few Places in which he is in Danger of greatly missing it. He hopes that he has*

proposed no Illustration, but what will be found agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, and the Experience of Believers.

This candid and humble Declaration, persuades the Author of the following Sheets to believe, the Annotator will not be offended with him for attempting to carry the Work of Explanation still farther on, and will permit him without grudging, to avail himself of his excellent and pious Notes, for that Purpose.

In the Year 1778, another Edition of the Pilgrim appeared, with Notes, explanatory, experimental and practical, by Mr. MASON, but neither does that Edition preclude the Usefulness of this Attempt. It is also acknowledged here, that the Notes of that Edition have suggested several of the Thoughts, which have been dilated in the following Pages.

The

The Mode of Explanation adopted here, is that of a Series of Letters to a Friend: this Mode is preferred to writing Notes upon the Text, as it gives a larger Scope to dilate on the important Topics of Christian Profession and Experience, alluded to in the Allegory: it also offers its Help to those Persons who are possessed of any Edition of the Pilgrim's Progress, without putting them to the Expence of purchasing another.

May the Prince and Forerunner of Pilgrim's travelling to Mount Zion, smile on this feeble Attempt to assist his Followers, and may they kindly accept the Assistance offered them by one who loves their Prince; and being himself a Pilgrim of considerable Date, having trod much of the Path, and being perhaps near the End of it; can speak much from Experience, in explaining

plaining the Allegory, as the Author himself did in writing it.

The Second Part of the Pilgrim's Progress is beautiful and excellent, though not equal to the First. Should this Key to the First Part meet with Acceptance, a Key to the Second shall follow it, in the same Mode.

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A KEY

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K E Y
TO THE
PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

LETTER I.

AMONG the various Blessings of early Piety, I account it not the least, that the young Christian possesses Vigour of Mind to search after Knowledge, and Strength of Memory to retain his Acquisitions. I consider my dear SYNTYCHE as willing to improve these Advantages, and congratulate him on the Prospect of the Benefits he may derive from a Knowledge of Divine Things acquired in early Youth.

I chearfully accede to the Proposal of making the Pilgrim's Progress the Subject of my Correspondence with you: and as, to all Appearance, much of the Path of Life,

Life, and consequently much of the Path to Glory, remains yet for you to tread; you have done wisely in choosing this Subject: For, whenever it shall please GOD to lead you into Situations, and exercise you with Trials, analogous with those of BUNYAN'S Pilgrim, your Memory will furnish you with excellent Things, suitable to your Case.

We are exhorted to *be Followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.* Permit me therefore to recommend to you, the Man of GOD, whose Riddle we are to expound, as an eminent Pattern of Fidelity to GOD and his own Conscience in the Sight of GOD. He was thoroughly persuaded in his own Mind, and worshipped GOD according to that Conviction; leaving his Brethren who differed from him in Opinion, in quiet Possession of their own Principles; he cultivated in his own Heart, the most affectionate and benevolent Sentiments towards them. I earnestly recommend to SYNTYCHE to avoid all Bigotry, and at the same Time to be at Pains to know what is Truth, and act with Consistency according to his Principles.

This

This Man of GOD suffered twelve Years imprisonment for Nonconformity to the Forms of Religion established by Law, for as to the doctrinal Articles of the Establishment, it does not appear that he deviated from them. The Prison was the Den "where he laid him down to Sleep," and dreamed this precious Dream: easy and calm under his Sufferings for CHRIST, he employed his compelled Retirement from public Labours, in preaching by his Pen. These beautiful Excursions of sanctified Fancy, fully shew a Mind at rest, and fully prove that BUNYAN, like another Peter, could sleep soundly in a Prison. His Bonds were not the Bonds of an evil Doer, but *the Bonds of the Gospel*.

To suffer Bonds and Imprisonment for CHRIST, though honourable, and in respect to the Reward promised, glorious; is nevertheless bitter to the Flesh, and repugnant to our natural love of Liberty. It is impossible we can choose it but as the Alternative of not denying our Master. JESUS therefore advises his Disciples to fly from City to City, to avoid Persecution; but where it could not be avoided without Sa-
crifices

crifices unworthy of the Servant of CHRIST, to suffer its utmost Rigours.

Rejoice with me SYNTYCHE, that our Lot is fallen in better Days: far from being persecuted, we are protected in exercising all the Rights of Conscience. Liberty, religious as well as civil, is the Glory of our Land. How great then will be our Guilt, and how contemptible our Characters! if we are less zealous for, and less diligent in the Service of God, than those were whose Zeal and Fidelity exposed them to the bitterest Sufferings. But it is Time we attend to the more immediate Subject of our Correspondence.

The RAGGED, BURDENED MAN, turning his Face from his own House, weeping, trembling and uttering a lamentable Cry, is a Sinner awakened to a Sense of his Sin, and a Knowledge of his condemned and miserable State in consequence of it. The Book in his Hand, in which he reads, and weeps, and trembles at its Contents; shews us, that true Conviction for Sin is by the Word of God. *I had not known Sin*, says Paul, *unless the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet.* The Alarms of such a Person, are very different from the Terrors of superstitious

tious Ignorance, which generally arise from some sudden Fright, Sickness, or imminent Danger; and are easily quieted with the silly Mummeries of Priestcraft. The Entrance of God's *Word* gives Light to the Soul, and the Reason and Judgment of the Sinner plead the Cause of God against him. He sees that *the Commandment is holy, just, and good*, and feels the Equity of his Condemnation for Disobedience: and nothing can quiet his Fears and comfort his Heart, but that Word which alarmed and wounded him.

Real Convictions receive their Strength from the Divine Authority of Scripture: they arise from a Belief of what God has there spoken. Death and Judgment are brought near to the Perception of the Mind: the awful Consequences of standing before God, appear in such a tremendous Light, that all inferior Concerns are swallowed up in the Care of the *one Thing needful*: Hence CHRISTIAN is represented as standing with his Face from his own House.

Saving Convictions cannot be shaken off, they are deep Impressions of Truth, which make the Remembrance of Transgressions bitter; and the Regrets and Sorrows arising
from

from that Remembrance, sincere and lasting. *Mine Iniquities*, says David, *are gone over my Head: as an heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me. I am troubled: I am bowed down greatly: I go mourning all the Day.* Hence the Man is described as having "a great BURDEN on his Back," as complaining that "he is undone, by Reason of a BURDEN that lay hard upon him, and which he feared would sink him lower than the Grave."

The Sorrows and Terrors of all awakened Sinners are not equal in Degree, though they are the same in Nature and Quality. God wounds in order to heal: his Wisdom directs how deep to wound, and his Love prevents its being too deep. Those Persons therefore needlessly distress themselves, who fear their State is not good, because they have not felt those distracting Terrors, of which others speak: and those Persons are rash and uncandid, who, having felt these Terrors themselves, are suspicious of the State of those who have not. Sorrow for Sin there must undoubtedly be, in true Repentance; but the Degree of it is fully sufficient; if it causes a Sinner to *flee from the Wrath to come.* Agitations of
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the Mind are not the Standard by which we are to try the Truth of Grace.

The Man was "clothed with RAGS," to indicate that sense of Shame, as well as Guilt, which the awakened Sinner feels. Persons of delicate Sensibility are greatly ashamed to appear before their Equals, much more, before their Superiors, in ragged and squalid Clothes. Dress, in the human Idea, contributes much to procure us Respect, or Contempt: from hence is borrowed that strikingly figurative Language of the Prophet, *All our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags*. There are no Persons, however bad and wicked, but have done some good Things, or are possessed of some good Properties; they are too sufficiently sensible of it, and value themselves upon the supposed Merit of these Things: These are, in a Figure, their best Clothes, and they love to appear in them before others; that they may attract their Esteem and Respect.

When the Mind glances toward God, and turns that Way, as it sometimes will, in spite of Hell and its own native Enmity; these Things constitute its Dress, and keep it in Countenance. *God, I thank thee,*

I have done this, or that : GOD, I thank thee I am so, and so. When therefore the Sinner is awakened to a sight and sense of Sins ; and finds that he must answer to GOD for them, he turns his Regards to his good Deeds, or good Properties, in hopes that these will operate in his Favour : but he is forced to view them now by that same sacred Light, which shews him his Transgressions and Disobedience : alas ! how great his Surprize ! 'tis like that of a Man, who going to his Wardrobe to put on a Court Dress, finds it to be nothing but *filthy Rags*.

That free and glorious GRACE may be suitably exalted, and the Salvation held forth in the Gospel be suitable and welcome ; the Sinner must see his RAGGED, as well as feel his BURDENED Condition : must be ashamed of all he has accounted his Righteousness, as well as ashamed of his Sin and Transgression. No EVANGELIST can with Propriety tell him of the WICKET GATE, or point him to the SHINING LIGHT, till he is found, RAGGED, BURDENED, TREMBLING, and CRYING-OUT, *What must I do to be saved ?*

GOD works by the Means of his Word, whether by reading or hearing it, is no
mat-

matter: the Man's Distress arose from what he read in the Book which was in his Hand. The Conviction of some Sinners, perhaps the greater Number, is from hearing the Purport of that Book declared. Either way it is the Words of that Book, and *Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God*. Mark farther, though this Book distressed the Man, he could not lay it by: It was the Companion of his solitary Walks, and he read it with Tears and Prayers. When God has touched the Heart, the Word becomes precious, and even before it gives Comfort, is more prized *than necessary Food*.

A proper View of our own Danger as Sinners, will awaken a suitable Concern for the Danger of others, especially our dear Relatives: and however for a while we keep our Sorrows to ourselves; that Concern will make us speak to them. Here generally begin the outward Trials of a Christian; he is first mortified by the Pity of his Friends, for his supposed Frenzy; and then wounded by their Ill-nature for persisting in his Testimony. *JESUS came to send Fire upon Earth, to divide Households amongst themselves, to make a Man's Foes those of his own Family*. For this Cause, many a Person has been forced to give up domestic

domestic Happiness to secure their eternal Interests; *they that are after the Flesh will persecute those that are after the Spirit.*

EVANGELIST'S Conversation with, and Counsel to the Man, point out what ought to be the Conduct of Ministers of the Gospel, towards Persons under Concern of Soul: and in proportion as love to CHRIST, and the Souls of Men, fills their Hearts, they will attend to this Duty, and endeavour to bring the Sinner to the Knowledge of a SAVIOUR. Let us, my dear Friend, attend to the several Parts of the Work of an EVANGELIST, as marked in the Allegory.

First, to single out Persons under Distress of Soul, and with an affectionate Courtesy to encourage them to open their distressed Hearts, and by pertinent Interrogatories, assist them in laying open their Condition.

Secondly, to urge upon them the necessity of going forward, and guard them against stopping short of real Conversion; Conviction is not Conversion; and though all saving Conviction leads to real Conversion, all Conviction does not do so. Felix trembled, but put off Conversion to a more convenient Season. Ministers should manage with Prudence the Compassion of
their

their own Hearts, and not be hasty in opening the Consolations of the Gospel, till they see that nothing but a Saviour will satisfy the Sinner: Till then they must be warned, as by Authority from God, to *flee from the Wrath to come.*

Thirdly, when the Sinner anxiously asks *where he must fly, and what he must do to be saved,* he is to be directed to CHRIST, as the only Saviour, because *there is no other Name given amongst Men, whereby we can be saved.* And, *no Man can come to the Father,* that is, in Reconcilement and Peace, *but by him:* But because the coming Sinner's Ideas of the SAVIOUR, and the Nature of his Salvation, are often very confused and imperfect, he is to be taught to look to, and study the Scripture Account of these Things.

This SAVIOUR, who calls himself *the Door,* and *the strait Gate;* our Author represents by a little WICKET placed at the Head of the Way that leads to Mount Zion, through which the Man must pass to get into that Way, and where he must receive Instructions concerning it, to shew that by CHRIST alone we are introduced into a State of Grace, and must receive
from

from him, all the Laws and Ordinances of that State. To obtain Faith in this SAVIOUR, the Word must be regarded as a *Lamp to the Feet, and a Light to the Path,* and taken heed to, and credited as a *sure Word,* which will cause *the Day to dawn, and the Daystar to arise in the Heart.*

The Man now begins to run: his Flight, and what followed upon it, shall be the Subject of my next Letter.

The Things we have been considering, my dear SYNTYCHE, describe the Ground you have passed over in your Experience: so far at least as relates to Conviction of Sin by the Law or Commandment, as preparing the Soul for the Reception of JESUS CHRIST. You will bless him because he hath opened your Eyes: born of, and brought up in a godly Family, your Calling and Conversion did not make you a Wonder, and a Gazingstock to them: How great your Cause of Thankfulness for this circumstantial Difference, as it has saved you from Trials which would have been bitter to your Soul. May JESUS guide you to the End. So prays

ANDRONICUS.

L E T T

LETTER II.

WHEN the Light of Truth shining in the Conscience, induces a Person to make an open Profession of the Ways of CHRIST, his carnal Friends and Relatives become seriously alarmed for the Consequences. In BUNYAN'S Days, these Consequences were great ; a good Name, Reputation, Esteem, and the Friendship of the Neighbourhood, were sure to be lost : perhaps Trade, and worldly Circumstances greatly suffered ; for there has been those *who would not employ, or buy, and sell, with any that had not the Mark of the Beast, or the Number of his Name.* Fines and Imprisonments were also often the Consequences of such a Profession. No Wonder CHRISTIAN'S Wife and Children cried after him to return. Carnal Relatives are in earnest to dissuade, because such Consequences must affect their worldly Comforts ; and seeing no Want of CHRIST, they can have no Motive to lose any Thing for him. What Strength of Resolution is necessary,

to determine a Man to withstand the Soli-
 citations of the Wife of his Bosom, and the
 Children of his Bowels? the Entreaties and
 Remonstrances of affectionate Parents, and
 Brethren and Sisters? and to stand as the
 Butt of their unceasing Resentment, and
 continual Upbraidings? yet this is the Law
 of the King of Zion: *If any Man come to me,
 and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife,
 and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea,
 and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.*
 A Person thus circumstanced, must, like
 CHRISTIAN, stop his Ears against the Plead-
 ings of Flesh and Blood, and remember
 ETERNAL LIFE is at Stake. See, my SYN-
 TYCHE, how much it has cost some, to be
good Soldiers of JESUS CHRIST, and what
Hardships they have endured.

In the Characters of OBSTINATE and
 PLIABLE, we see, that though natural Men
 may differ much in Temper and Disposi-
 tion, they all agree in Ignorance and Dis-
 like of the Truth. By OBSTINATE, is
 manifest, that while the Love of the World
 rules in the Heart, no Examples or Argu-
 ments, will prevail with a Man to seek a
 better Inheritance. Dispute with them in
 their own Way, and they will weary you
 with

with Cavils and Reasonings: but bring them close to Scripture, they are soon silenced, and fling away in Anger. PLIABLE seems to be the same Character with the Stony-Ground Hearers; pleased for a while with the bright Side of Divine Things; and looking to the Crown, without considering the Cross, they outstrip sometimes the real Convert: the first Rebuff they meet with, they do Violence to their Conversions, and get rid of their Religion, as soon as they can: A Conduct in which the Approbation of the World will keep them in Countenance.

It is very difficult for an awakened Sinner to maintain a Confidence, or even a Hope, that God will accept him, and Pardon his Transgressions for CHRIST's Sake. The Remembrance of former Transgressions, with the aggravating Circumstances attending them; new Surprisals into Sin, through the Force of present Temptations; the rising of corrupt and depraved Affections in the Heart; all these concur to shake the Sinner's Hope, and tempt him to despair; forming a SLOUGH of DESPOND into which he sinks, so that he seems like one who is fallen into *a horrible Pit*, and is

sinking in *miry Clay*. The Ministers of JESUS have a peculiar Charge to look well to such dejected Souls. *Strengthen ye the weak Hands*, says their compassionate LORD, *and confirm ye the feeble Knees*; *say to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be strong, fear not, your GOD will come, even GOD with a Re-compence*; *he will come and save you*. What a Mercy, when a poor desponding Sinner obtains the Benefit of the affectionate Encouragements of some kind Servant of the LORD, some BARNABAS, who is the *Son of Consolation* to his drooping Soul. For want of this, some have lain under spiritual Dejection for many Years. Ministers should also pay particular Attention to the Doubts and Fears, of awakened Sinners, and often in their public Ministrations, point them to the Promises, of Acceptance, and Forgiveness, which, like "*good and substantial stepping Stones*, placed through the Midst of a *Slough*," for the Benefit of Passengers; serve to support the Steps of weak and uncertain Faith.

You, my dear SYNTYCHE, I know, remember with Gratitude, the Benefits you derived from the Ministry of EUODIAS in your coming to JESUS CHRIST: he pointed
you

you to the *Steps*, and though you sometimes staggered, you was preserved from falling. I have often lamented that there are not more Preachers like EUODIAS: but some attend only to thundering out the Law, to awaken Sinners—others to state and establish the Doctrines of the Gospel—and others delight to dwell on the Privileges of the Children of GOD. EUODIAS, who was a Master Builder in all these Respects, thought it more important to bestow a larger Share of his Attention to the *weak Hands*, the *feeble Knees*, and the *fearful Hearts*. His Voice, like the Trump of Jubilee, collected Zion's Mourners round him. He knew their Case, and applied himself to their Relief—he knew they did not doubt whether JESUS was a Saviour, but whether he would save them. Euodias, penetrated the Thoughts of their Hearts; hunted out, and answered their Objections and Fears; and many Hundreds have blessed GOD for him, as a Father who had *begotten them through the Gospel*.

Alas! how many are the Snares and Temptations that attend young Converts: Earth, as well as Hell, will strive to turn them away from CHRIST, to seek Relief by

other Means, We read of some, *who serve not our LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their own Bellies, and by good Words, and fair Speeches, deceive the Hearts of the Simple.* Men who profess to be Friends to Religion, but have the Art to accommodate themselves with one, that shall not clash with their worldly Interest. These **WORLDLY WISEMEN** are dangerous Enemies to young Converts, because their decent Appearance, Sobriety, and Gravity, excite Respect, and prevent Suspicions of Danger in their Counsel. These represent the Trouble and Sorrow of an awakened Sinner, as the Effect of a dis-tempered Brain, and describe the Profession of the Gospel, as a Way that is rough, tedious, unpleasant, and dangerous: they teach, to stifle Conviction, and gain Peace of Conscience, by a civil, moral, and sober Life, as sufficient to recommend to the Favour of God; they profess a great Regard for the Letter of the Law, and attach themselves to the fashionable and popular Modes of Worship.

A young Christian may be seduced by the carnal Reasoning of these Men, because they do not seek to turn him away from Religion. **WORLDLY WISEMAN** would not have

have CHRISTIAN go back to the City of DESTRUCTION, a State of apparent Atheism; but he would have him settle in the Village of MORALITY. Now, who would suspect Morality to be dangerous? indeed it is not so in itself; but the best Things when perverted, become most deadly and pernicious. To trust in our own Righteousness, and so stop short of CHRIST, is to expose our Souls to the most awful Danger of eternal Ruin, *for as many as are of the Works of the Law, are under the Curse.*

But, though a young Christian may be seduced and drawn into this Snare, he cannot continue in it. Indeed, the LORD could easily prevent those who seek him from committing such Mistakes, but he sometimes permits them to wander from the right Path, that they may know the Deceitfulness of their own Hearts, become more dependant upon him, and more compassionate to others: It is impossible that an awakened Mind should obtain even false Peace by the Works of the Law. The Spirit of the LORD has opened the Eyes of his Understanding, to see the Spirituality of the Commandment; so that, as the Mountain appeared more high and

B 4 tremendous,

tremendous, and its Thunders and Lightnings more awful and dreadful, when CHRISTIAN drew nigh to it; the awakened Sinner, seeking to the Law for Relief, only serves to manifest more abundantly the Magnitude and Terror of the Law, and to increase his own Guilt and Fear: this Situation is more dreadful than the SLOUGH of DESPOND. There, Doubts and Fears about acceptance with CHRIST, kept the Soul from going forward: but here, the Certainty of Condemnation from that which has been chosen as the Hope of Life, fills the Soul with Terrors which distract it, and from which nothing can relieve it but the Gospel.

Well might Paul call it, *the glorious Gospel of the blessed God*. Glorious indeed, to follow with its Mercy, those who turn their Backs upon it. Well might CHRISTIAN "blush for Shame" at the Sight of EVANGELIST. But mark SYNTYCHE, in the Discourse of EVANGELIST, and its Effects upon CHRISTIAN; the severe Resentments of GOD against those that slight his Mercy, and turn away from the Gospel. Let us, my Friend, *Fear, lest a Promise being left us of entering into his Rest, we should seem to*
come

come short of it ; and let us labour to enter into that Rest, lest we fall after the same Example of Unbelief.

I said, it is impossible for an awakened Mind to obtain even false Peace by the Works of the Law. Permit me to explain : I do not suppose every one that is alarmed with Fears of Wrath, and who from hearing the Gospel concerning JESUS, sets out to seek him, to be truly awakened : they may be frightened, but not enlightened. It is no Wonder, therefore, if they gladly accept as their Relief, a Mode of Religion less troublesome to the Flesh, than the Cross of CHRIST. Being blind and deaf to the Spirituality of the Law, they see not the Flashes of Fire, nor hear the Thunders of Divine Wrath : they approach the Law without Fear : no Wonder then, if a Reformation of Manners, if they have been gross Sinners, should content them ; and a little MORALITY, or even CIVILITY, should deliver their Consciences from its Burden. Unhappy Creatures, by stopping short of CHRIST, they have only changed their Path to Hell. Let us, my Brother, go on singing,

- “ Should all the Forms that Men devise.
- “ Assault my Faith with treacherous Art,
- “ I'd call 'em Vanity and Lies,
- “ And bind the Gospel to my Heart.”

ANDRONICUS.

L E T T E R III.

COME my SYNTYCHE, let us retire from the burning Mountain, whose Neighbourhood is the foolish Choice of Pride and Self-righteousness: let us approach the WICKET GATE, and attend to the Heart instructing, and comforting Scenes of humble Penitence, and Divine Benevolence exhibited there.

I am, says JESUS, the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no Man cometh to the Father but by me: I am the Door: by me, if any Man enter in, he shall be saved. JESUS is the Way, as he is made of GOD to us, Wisdom, or saving Knowledge: Righteousness to justify us from Obligation to Punishment, and to give a Title to Life: Sanctification, to make us meet for our Inheritance: and Redemption from all the Dangers which threaten us, *that we may be preserved from falling, and be presented faultless before the Throne of his Glory, with exceeding Joy.* He is the Door, or entrance to all this Grace. He is represented, not

as the ample Portal of a Palace, but as a *strait Gate*, a *little Wicket* that will admit only the Pilgrim and his Burden, the Sinner and his Sorrow. When a Sinner believes the Word, and trusts in the Name of the LORD JESUS for Pardon and Acceptance with GOD, he enters this Gate, and begins the Way which terminates in Glory. This Gate, though free for the Entrance of all who will enter thereby, is kept shut: the Sinner must knock: he cannot open the Gate himself, another must open it. *We are saved through Faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the Gift of GOD.* To all that knock, *the Kindness and Love of GOD our SAVIOUR* opens the Door, he makes no Objections to any, *they are in no wise cast out*: nay more, they are saved from those sore Temptations, those awful spiritual Alarms, by which Satan strives to hinder the coming Sinner. But let us view these Matters a little more distinctly.

The Pilgrim knocked more than once or twice. Though Pardon and Life, are the free Gift of GOD, they must be obtained by Prayer, importunate frequent Prayer, that will take no Repulse; like the Woman of Canaan, who though repulsed more than

once, would take no Denial. The Sinner must pray confessing his Sin and Misery, the Plague of his Heart, and the Crimes of his Life: acknowledging the Justice of his Condemnation by the Law. He must plead his Danger, Distress, and Wretchedness, on Account of Sin; he must plead the Promises of the Gospel; the Assurances of Success, which have allured and encouraged him to seek Salvation by JESUS CHRIST: nor must he leave off, nor let the Angel of the Covenant go without a Blessing.

“ Though Worlds conspire to drive him thence,
 “ Moveless and firm his Heart should lie.
 “ Resolv’d, for that’s his last Defence;
 “ If he must perish: there to die.”

To render the Blessings prayed for, more welcome and valuable, they are sometimes mercifully delayed, and granted only to our Importunity.

Remark, my dear Friend, the good Will of God to the Children of Men: he receives without upbraiding. “ We make no Objection against any, (says GOODWILL) notwithstanding all they have done before they came hither.” What Grace and Mercy! what noble generous Goodness! Goodness which breaks the Sinner’s Heart, and
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makes him more ashamed of his Vileness. Terrors and Fears may drive him at first to seek the LORD; but it is Grace, the Riches, the Fulness of Grace, which binds him the Servant of the LORD for ever. *I have blotted out as a Cloud thy Transgressions, and as a thick Cloud thy Sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Thy Sins and Iniquities I will remember no more.* This is the Voice of pardoning Grace, which makes the Sinner say, *What have I to do any more with Idols? I have heard and observed him: in Thee the Fatherless findeth Mercy.*

Mark with what Joy the Sinner is received, and how the Bowels of paternal Mercy sound over him! *Ephraim is my dear Son, he is a pleasant Child, for though I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still. It is meet we should make merry, for this my Son was dead, but is alive again: he was lost, but is found.*

Mark also the Pity of the LORD for those who slight his Mercy. "Alas, poor man, (said GOODWILL, speaking of PLIABLE) is the celestial Glory of so small esteem with him, that he counteth it not worth running the Hazard of a few Difficulties

ficulties to obtain it? *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? my Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together. And beholding the City, he wept over it, saying, O that thou hadst known the Things that make for thy Peace!*

If the Sinner is not upbraided of his God, he cannot but blame, and upbraid himself: he confesses, not only his Transgressions before he was awakened, but his Wanderings and Errors afterwards. *I will confess my Transgressions to the LORD, says David, and mine Iniquities will I not hide.* CHRISTIAN candidly confesses he was no better than PLIABLE who went back, because he himself turned to go in to the Way of Death: that had it not been for the Mercy of GOD in sending EVANGELIST, he had never got to the Gate. A pardoned Sinner is humble under the Sense of Pardon, and ascribes the Difference betwixt himself and others not to his own good Conduct, but to the distinguishing Grace and Mercy of GOD in CHRIST JESUS.

JESUS is the Friend of Sinners, in saving his People from their Sins: he points out to them the high Way of Holiness, which was marked by himself in the Days of his
Flesh

Flesh, by Patriarchs, and Prophets, before, and by his Apostles after him. This is the Way in which they must walk to arrive at MOUNT ZION, being the only Path which leads thither. *For without Holiness no Man shall see the LORD.* Along this Path let us follow our Pilgrim, and mark the Difficulties, Dangers, Combats, and Victories that attend him; and may our Hearts treasure up the Cautions, and Comforts, our Attendance on CHRISTIAN may afford us.

One Thing in this Allegory may appear a little strange, that CHRISTIAN does not get rid of his Burden at the Gate: because we are told that Faith in CHRIST, always removes the Guilt of Sin. Let us remember, that Faith in CHRIST can only produce Effects in us, correspondent to what we understand and believe concerning him. We are to *grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.* Deliverance from the Guilt and Burden of Sin, arises from an Understanding and believing View, of that Sacrifice which atoned for it. A Sinner may apprehend and believe enough of the Mercy of GOD in CHRIST, to induce him to walk with Hope in the Way of Holiness; though not fully
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to relieve his Conscience from Guilt: he will obtain *that* Mercy, when he obtains the Knowledge of CHRIST crucified. The Cross is the *Place of Deliverance*; "There (said GOODWILL) thy BURDEN will fall from thy Back of itself."

As a Christian is to walk by Faith, and not by Sight, he needs Instruction in the Things which concern his best Interests. The Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, is given to guide unto all Truth, as the several Parts of it become necessary: he opens the Eyes of the Understanding, and by Means of the Word, forms in the Heart, the necessary Principles of Faith and Fear. So CHRISTIAN is sent to the House of the INTERPRETER, that he may be shewn excellent Things, and such as would be useful to him in his Journey.

Where is the House of the INTERPRETER, where he exhibits his Treasures of Wisdom? *It is the HOLY SCRIPTURES, SYNTYCHE, which you have known from a Child, and which have made you wise to Salvation through Faith which is in JESUS CHRIST. These you know are profitable for Doctrine for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction*

Righteousness: by these, the HOLY SPIRIT makes the Man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works: continue to resort to this sacred School, that you may always have *Understanding to keep his Law*. *Blessed is the Man that beareth Wisdom, watching daily at his Gates, and waiting at the Posts of his Doors.*

JESUS commands us to *search the Scriptures*, and assures us, that both in him, and his Followers, they must be fulfilled: how important then is it for us to know what they contain? to understand their sacred Meaning and Import? This, like every other Blessing, must come by Prayer. When CHRISTIAN came to the House of the INTERPRETER, he knocked over and over. And David prayed, *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold wondrous Things out of thy Law*. Pray earnestly, my dear Friend, that the LORD the SPIRIT, may lead you *into Truth*, for unless the INTERPRETER be with you, whatever Amusement you may get by the Scriptures, or whatever Speculations you may gather from them, you will still be without the House, and your Heart never the better. Knock then for Entrance, and be not content

tent with the Attendance of a Servant, but ask for "the Master of the House, and the Use of his Candle."

The House of the INTERPRETER, is judiciously placed in this Allegory, near the WICKET GATE, and at the Beginning of the Way; because Divine Knowledge is peculiarly important and useful to young Converts; many of whom are called out of the grossest Ignorance even of the Letter of the Word: and even those who from Education have some Knowledge of the Letter, are, till taught of God, Strangers to the Riches of Divine Wisdom which it contains: the Followers of JESUS and his Apostles were therefore called Disciples, that is, Persons under Tuition. These Remarks no way imply that the LORD does not lead and guide his People in *all* their Way: The House of the INTERPRETER is as necessary to the Believer of old standing, as to the *Babe in CHRIST*.

In the next Letter we will accompany CHRISTIAN, and the INTERPRETER, into the Apartments of the House; and it will be our great Mercy, if we are as well pleased and instructed as the Pilgrim was: the Things equally concern us, and the Guilt will

will be ours, if we do not Profit by them, May we be *Wise to understand, and Prudent to know them: for the Ways of the LORD are right, and the Just shall walk in them; but the Transgressors shall fall therein.* Farewell.

ANDRONICUS.

L E T T E R I V .

WISDOM, says Solomon, *both builded her House, she both hewn out her seven Pillars.* How applicable to the House of the INTERPRETER; where seven important Representations, like monumental Pillars, stand for our Instruction, Comfort, and Warning.

Because *Faith comes by Hearing*, and God hath so circumstanced us, that the Ministry of the Word is necessary to our Growth in Grace; he has also graciously provided for us in this Respect, by raising up and sending Men, furnish'd by himself with Gifts and Grace necessary for the Work. What

a Portrait is here given of such a Man! he may well be called One of a Thousand: his Eyes lifted up to Heaven in affectionate Concern for the Success of his Ministry, praying for Sufficiency of Wisdom and Grace for himself, and for Success with those who hear him. *We do not, says Paul, cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the Knowledge of his Will, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding, that ye might walk worthy of God.*

His Hands hold the SACRED VOLUME, as the Source of all his Doctrine, *not following cunningly devised Fables, but taking heed to the sure Word, studying to shew himself approved to God, a Workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* Hence the Law of Truth is written on his Lips, because, as one who has obtained Mercy, he does not walk in Craftiness, nor handle the Word of GOD deceitfully, but by manifestation of the Truth, commending himself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of GOD. The Love of CHRIST constrains him to labour for the Souls CHRIST purchased with his Blood: he turns his Back on worldly Emoluments, not feeding the Flock,

Flock, and taking the Oversight of it for filthy Lucre sake, but of a ready Mind: not as a Lord over, but an Example to the Flock: waiting for his Reward till the Chief Shepherd shall appear.

This is the Man appointed by JESUS to feed his Sheep, and to be esteemed by us very highly in Love for his Work-sake.

Suppose my SYNTYCHE we contrast this Portrait with another, less amiable indeed, but not less faithful in its likeness? viz. a Man, pretending to be a Minister of CHRIST, and obtruding himself upon Mankind as such. To form the Contrast we must describe him thus; His Eyes roving among his Hearers, to mark their Number and Quality, and from thence to take his Measures accordingly: The best of Books furnishes only a Motto for his Notes, and on his Lips is found *Philosophy, and vain Deceit, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after CHRIST*; and lest the Delicacy of the Polite should be offended, couched in all the Elegance of Classic Purity. Instead of standing as pleading with Men; behold a careful Attention to the Attitudes of agreeable Delivery: the World is before his Face, Popularity and Gain as the

the Consequence of it, are never out of Sight, and the Crown of popular Applause hangs over his Head.

If Entertainment and Amusement were the Objects of our Attendance on the public Ministry, we could not do better than to seek the Man whose Portrait we have last viewed ; but if to *find the Word and eat it ; to bear that our Souls may live ; to be built up in our most Holy Faith ; to be kept in the Love of GOD ;* if these Things are matter of Moment with us ? let us seek the Man whose Picture CHRISTIAN saw : the Man appointed by the Lord of the Place to be our Guide in Difficulties. Will the Man of opposite Character, tell us where to *fly from the Wrath to come ?* Will he tell us of the WICKET GATE ? Will he shew us the SHINING LIGHT as our Guide ? Will he pull us out of the SLOUGH of DESPOND ? Will he fetch us away from the BURNING MOUNTAIN ? Alas ! No : *from such then turn away, remember who has said, Take heed how, and what ye bear.*

From the Picture of the Minister, let us proceed to the Emblem of the Ministry, which points out its distinct, principal, or foundation Parts, and instructs us in the Use

Use we should make of them in Hearing. The Preaching of the Law has its Use, in shewing what is Sin; in declaring the Wrath of God against it; and thereby destroying the Sinner's false Peace, and false Hopes. But all beyond this Effect, is Enmity and Horror, for *the Law worketh Wrath, and Transgression abounds by Means of the Commandment.* Do you ask how this is? One who has felt it, can describe it without Difficulty.

Let us make a Similitude. A Man is convicted in his Mind, that he has basely affronted and injured another; he is told, and his own Heart believes it true, that the offended Party highly resents, and has Power to make his Resentments to be severely felt. What are the Dispositions of the Man in this Case? they are Hatred, they are Hostile, they are disposed to every Thing that may thwart the offended Party still more: this is natural. But should the offended Party come forward with Dispositions of Peace instead of Wrath, and confer Benefits instead of taking Vengeance; bad as Mankind are by Nature, there are few Hearts that would not be melted by such a Conduct, at least for the present Moment.

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The Word of Truth has taught us, this is the Way to conquer our Enemies: the Preaching of the Gospel is similar to this in its Effects: it holds forth Peace and Reconciliation to the Sinner through the Blood of CHRIST: sets before him *forgiveness of Sin*, and the *Gift of eternal Life*: and assures him of the good Will and Kindness of GOD towards him—this destroys the Enmity caused by the Law of Commandment, and conciliates the Sinner's Affections to the Service of GOD—this Change is natural and rational, according to the Order of Cause and Effect; but it is the *Grace of GOD*, that makes it permanent and saving.

“ 'Tis Love that makes our chearful Feet

“ In swift Obedience move:

“ The Devils know, and tremble too:

“ But Satan cannot love.”

Let us, my dear SYNTYCHE, make a wise Use of both these Parts of the public Ministry, by hearing them with Discretion.

Turn not away from hearing the Law, as if it was an Enemy: It will be your Friend, if you *use it lawfully*: it will remind you of what you was: it will tell you what you are, and what you should be. If

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the Law, in doing this; to allude to our Author's Metaphor, should raise a Dust in the Parlour of the Heart; you may depend upon it, that it wants sweeping: have recourse to *the Blood of sprinkling*; that it may be swept and cleansed with Pleasure.

Hearken to the Gospel, not as an Opiate to still the Irritation of Conviction by the Law, but as the Source of your Sanctification, coming with its sweet and precious Influence, to dispose your Heart to have *Respect to all God's Commandments*; thus *rightly dividing*, and suitably applying both Law and Gospel, you will profit by both.

Let your Conversation be without Covetousness, and be content with such Things as ye have: for he hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*. What a profitable Exhortation, and what a sweet Promise to enforce it! Will God never leave nor forsake us? we ought then to be content with what he gives us now, though it be but little: the heavenly Inheritance will make amends for all. Promises are made to encourage Faith; and we *walk by Faith, and not by Sight*. Now among the Trials Faith meets with, are, distressing Providences, and discouraging Prospects as to the Things

of this Life; these seem peculiarly designed to exercise our Patience. The Children of God, would be glad to have good Things now, and could relish them as well as others do; but their heavenly Father sees fit to deny most of them this Indulgence: for what Reasons we will not now consider: but it is a Mark of heavenly Wisdom to be patient under Sufferings and Trials, and wait for our good Things till the LORD *shall be revealed from Heaven.*

In your Patience possess ye your Souls, is the Advice of JESUS. How sublime in Wisdom! how extensive in Meaning! Mr. BUNYAN, however has aptly expressed its Import, by us, shewing a Child sitting quietly in his Chair, because his Governor would have him wait till the Beginning of next Year for his best Things.

This is describing Matters as they ought to be, not as they most frequently are. Formerly indeed it was said, *We look not at the Things which are seen, but at those Things which are not seen; for the Things which are seen, are temporal, but the Things which are not seen, are eternal.* Alas! how different the Case of many Professors now! they would not indeed have all their Portion in this World, but they are exceeding wretched,

wretched, because they have so little. * Far from *possessing their Souls in Patience* ; they lose the Government of their Temper, through the Adversities of Providence : they dare not indeed, directly quarrel with God, but fall dreadfully foul of Persons, and Things, which, as second Causes, have produced their Difficulties. I cannot consider such a Disposition, but as blamable, as well as unhappy ; and the Conduct resulting from it, in a Measure sinful. Right is right, and wrong is wrong, undoubtedly ; and we cannot help speaking of Things as we know them to be : but a Christian should look above, to a superior directing Hand. God will take from us what he pleases, and our Duty is to bless a taking, as well as a giving God.

You, dear SYNTYCHE, are as yet young, and probably have much of Life before you ; what your Lot will be as to Temporals, God has hid with himself. My Wish and Prayer for you is, that you learn to exercise Christian Patience : If your Pittance of worldly good is small, remember what is *laid up for you in Heaven*. *Be quiet, and hope for the LORD*.

The worst Lot of God's People, is infinitely better than the best Lot of the Men of

this World, because of the Reversion of each. The Christian has his evil Things in this Life, and shall be comforted hereafter; the worldly Man has his good Things now, and his Evil hereafter. As hereafter will be eternal, it needs no great Sagacity to determine, which has the best Lot in the present World; Poverty, with the Prospect of eternal Riches, or Riches, with the Prospect of eternal Poverty.

But Men of the World are properly represented by PASSION, for their Passions only govern them: they will have their good Things now, or they are much discontented and fretful: nay, they neglect every Concern, but that of getting their Portion into their own Hands: yea, there be some who will have it, whatever unlawful and ungodly Means they make use of to get it; and laugh at those simple honest Minds, who choose a different Conduct. Well, let them alone, and let not Christians be like them in any Measure, for *God laughs at them*, for Fools; *for he sees that their Day is coming*.

Though I believe, my dear Friend, that I have gone with you as far as the Simily will carry us; I will beg your Company yet a little farther, to what I believe you will

will not think is quite foreign to the Subject: it is to those Motives to Patience which do not rise immediately out of the Hope of eternal Life, though connected with it. May the God of *Patience* grant they may have their full Effect upon your Heart and mine.

The Covenant of Grace which secures our spiritual Blessings, contains also our temporal Mercies; and the Promise *verily thou shalt be fed*, is as firmly ratified by the Blood of CHRIST, as that in which he says, *I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand*. It is on this Ground our SAVIOUR reasons, when he considers the Fowls of the Air, as fed of God; and the Grass of the Field, as clothed by God; that he will much more feed and clothe his own Children: nothing is more clearly revealed in Scripture, than God's providential Care of his People.

Perhaps it is to place his tender Care of his Saints, in the most conspicuous Point of View, and in a Point of View distinct from his general Providence, that he has so many poor among them. I do not mean poor in the abject Sense of the Word, but

Persons who live as we say from Hand to Mouth; who, being destitute of permanent Resources, gather their precarious Bread under the Wing of his Providence. *GOD has chosen the Poor of this World to be rich in Faith. The poor and the afflicted People are to Trust in the Name of the LORD :* and why? if it be not that his tender Care of them may be manifested? why must they trust him more than others, if they have not a peculiar Right, and Interest, in him for worldly Things? This Right to his Care—this Dependance upon him—this Appearance of God in answer to his Promises—would not be apparent, were they not placed in Situations to render these Things visible.

God's People are taught to pray for *daily Bread : To be careful for Nothing, but in every Thing to make their Request known by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving.* To compel them to this Duty, and that the *Trial of their Faith may work Patience ;* the LORD brings them into Situations, where the common Resources of Providence seem to be cut off : there he displays his Faithfulness and Truth : they cry to him, and he delivers them from their Distresses.

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Their Faith may be sorely tried, and even so shaken as to be ready to say with the impious King of Israel, *This Evil is of the LORD, What? should I wait for the LORD any longer?* Nevertheless, the LORD will make them *wait for him, and wait upon him*; and in his own Time and Way deliver them.

GOD himself has amply proved this, if we credit the sacred Records; by working Miracles, where the ordinary Course of Things did not afford Resources to his Servants. Elijah flies into the Wilderness from the Wrath of Ahab, and dwells by the Brook Cherith: and, strange to tell, as the Means of procuring Bread was cut off; his LORD sent *Ravens to him, with Bread and Flesh, Morning and Evening*. Are we fond of the Marvellous? What can be more so than this? Voracious Birds to bring Food to a hungry Prophet; but Ravens are JEHOVAH's Servants, and he who hears *them* when *they* cry, and gives them their Food, makes them the Ministers of his Care for Elijah.

The Prophet drank of the Brook. While ordinary Means will do, there is no Need of more Miracles: but at last, the Brook is

dried up for want of Rain. Go, says the LORD, to Zarephath, *Behold I have commanded a Widow to sustain thee.* Was this Woman rich? Was her House stored with Plenty? Alas! she was gathering a few Sticks, to bake the last Morsel she had, and without any other Prospect than afterwards to famish with Hunger. What Penury and deep Distress! to an Eye of Sense, what an irretrievable Degree of Poverty; but GOD's Servants shall not starve: *For thus saith the LORD GOD of Israel, the Barrel of Meal shall not waste, neither shall the Cruise of Oil fail, until the Day that the LORD sendeth Rain upon the Earth.*

Not only strait Circumstances, but Debt may afflict the Children of GOD. A Woman cried to Elisha, *My Husband is dead, and the Creditor is come to take my two Sons for Bondmen. What hast thou?* says the Prophet. *Not any Thing, save one Pot of Oil,* said she. Poor Woman! a very small Trifle indeed to pay a large Debt, which required thy two Sons for Bondmen; but *is any Thing too hard for the LORD?* Go, says Elisha, *borrow empty Vessels, not a few, and pour out into all those Vessels, and set by that which is full.* What did GOD work?
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the Debt was paid—the Family was supported.

Pardon, my SYNTYCHE, this Digression: I now release you. If it be the Will of GOD to bring us under trying Providences; may we remember that *the LORD's Arm is not shortened, nor his Ear heavy*: May we *hope, and quietly wait for him*: So prays thy

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER V.

TURN we, my dear Friend, from Providence to Grace, and see the right Hand of JEHOVAH exalted in his wonderful Works: the Preservation of the Heart in the Fear of GOD, notwithstanding its inbred Corruption, and the Temptations of the Devil.

To throw Water upon Fire, is the most effectual Mode of extinguishing it: this arises from the direct Opposition there is in these two Elements: so soon then as the

Power of the Water exceeds that of the Fire, the Fire quickly becomes extinct. Grace and Sin, are as opposite in their Natures as Fire and Water, they cannot coalesce ; but whenever they come into contact, one must prevail, and the other die. CHRISTIAN saw one casting much Water upon the Fire to quench it, but the Fire did burn higher and hotter : this Effect, seemingly contrary to Nature, puzzled CHRISTIAN, till he was led behind the Wall, where was a Man casting Oil, secretly, into the Fire, which destroyed the Effect of the Water and encreased the Strength of the Flame.

The INTERPRETER has told us, both who the Destroyer and the Renovator are, and the Means they each of them use : Satan, the Enemy of our Salvation, spares no Pains, to extinguish the Flame of Religion in the Heart : he so suits, and adapts his Temptations, to our depraved Affections, and so incessantly plys them, that every gracious Disposition must perish ; did not the SAVIOUR of Sinners, as incessantly, counteract him by fresh Supplies of Grace.

Temptation is the Lot of every Saint : and the Wisdom, Love, and Faithfulness
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of God towards them, and their Fidelity to him, are much more signally displayed, by their being supported under, and brought through various Temptations; than they could be without Temptations. The LORD sometimes causes his People to carry it with a high Hand, against the Assaults of Hell and Sin: they are *strong in the LORD, and in the Power of his might*. But sometimes Temptations prevail, Sin abounds, and Grace apparently dies away. But does it die? No: it struggles for life, and revives again.

Now in both Cases, the strong and the weak State of Religion in the Heart, the Operations of Grace are secret, though the Means are visible: Else why are not those Means always alike, successful? and who can Account for the Word, Meditation, and Prayer, not always producing the same Effect? if we do not refer their Efficacy to the secret Influence of him who stood behind the Wall? Shall I be told, that the different Degree of Effect, in the same Means of Grace, arises from the Subject of these Means being differently disposed at different Times? I ask, from what Cause arises this Difference, if not from the

Dispositions of the Mind being sometimes damped by Sin, at other Times enlivened by Grace?

The Influences of Divine Grace operate secretly: perhaps, that Satan may be the more disappointed and confounded: and to convince the Believer, that his God is as near to, and careful of him, when he is crying, *Why standest thou afar off, O God? Why hidest thou thy Face?* as when he sings, *The LORD is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear?*

Let us, SYNTYCHE, improve this Subject: Grace is the LORD's, and he dispenses it in Wisdom and Goodness. Duty is ours: our Master Commands us to *watch and pray, that we enter not into Temptation*: let us do so in Faith, *holding fast the Profession of our Faith, and the Rejoicing of our Hope, steadfast to the End.* What though the SAVIOUR sometimes *stands behind our Wall*, and our Sensibilities do not perceive him? his Love and Grace are still the same: for though his sensible Presence is necessary for our Comfort, it is not so for our Salvation.

We learn from the stately Palace, with its glorious Inhabitants, the Entrance of which

which was guarded by armed Men, determined to do what Hurt and Mischief they could to the Men that would enter; that, there is a Heaven of Glory for all those, who think it worth their attaining: that there are also some, who are such determined Enemies to God and his Cause, that they will neither *enter into the Kingdom of GOD themselves, nor suffer others*, if they can prevent them. Thus, when Paul and Silas, were at Philippi, labouring in the Service of their Master, *the Multitude rose up together against them, and the Magistrates, and rent their Cloths, and beat them.* Satan played the same Game in Mr. BUNYAN'S Days: the Sword of the Magistrate, and the Violence of the Mob, were employed by him, to deter Men from the Profession of CHRIST. Blessed be his Name who ruleth in the Heavens, that he has said to his Enemies, *Be still, and know that I am GOD: I will be exalted in the Earth.* For believe me, Friend, but for his ordering of Matters, there are, even in these peaceable Days, those who would act the same Part.

Crouds pressed towards the Door, desirous to enter, but started back for Fear of the armed Men. Many would be glad of
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the CROWN, but are frightened at the CROSS. Was the Sword of Persecution to be unsheathed again, alas! what an Alteration would it make in the Appearance of the present religious World? but GOD's Cause ever did, and ever must subsist, a few now, as well as then, would nobly dare to give in their Names to CHRIST, and with the *Hope of Salvation for an Helmet*, and *the Sword of the Spirit* in their Hands, force their Way through all Opposition, *fighting the good Fight of Faith*, that they might *lay hold on eternal Life*.

Though public Persecution has ceased, there are some, I doubt not, who meet with Opposition in a private Way. *A Man's Foes may be those of his own Household*. It still remains as true as ever, that *through much Tribulation we must enter the Kingdom of God*. It is the appointed Way, and if we have it not by one Means, we shall by another: the Powers of Darknes will oppose our Passage, *Flesh and Blood, Principalities and Powers, the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, spiritual Wickedness in high Places, all are against us*: We have given in our Names, by assuming a Profession of CHRIST, and shall be branded eternally for *fearful*
and

and unbelieving, if we do not fight our Way through.

- “ Stand then in his great Might,
- “ With all his Strength endu'd:
- “ And take, to Arm you for the Fight,
- “ The Panoply of God :
- “ That having all Things done,
- “ And all your Dangers past,
- “ Ye may o'ercome through CHRIST alone,
- “ And stand entire at last.”

What an awful, what a solemn Scene ensues! the DARK-ROOM, and the Man in the IRON-CAGE, are powerful Calls to Watchfulness and Prayer. Harken to the Account this Man gives of himself: he was once a fair and flourishing Professor, both in his own Eyes, and the Eyes of others: thought himself going to Heaven, and had Joy at the Thoughts of getting thither: but was now shut up in deep Despair. Oh, *let us Fear, lest we seem to come short of the Promise.* Good God! what Changes may take place before we die! but how may such an awful Change take place? alas! may the LORD *put his Fear in our Hearts, that we may not depart from him:* May we watch against all Declensions from the Ways of GOD, *lest our Hearts be hardened*
through

through the Deceitfulness of Sin, and God shut us up for our Folly in the sad Reflections of our own Guilt.

“ The keen Vibration of bright Truth is Hell.”

Lusts, Pleasures, and Profits of the World, what Mischiefs are ye capable of producing! we know the Beginning of Sin, but God only knows the End of it.

Is there no Hope for such? to themselves there seems to be none. The Language of the Man in the CAGE intimates the Judgment a Person in such a Condition forms of his own State: especially such as have imbibed that comfortless Doctrine, that Soul-tormenting Lie, of the Day of Grace being past before the Day of Life: We know, however, that God can *beal Backsliders, and love them freely*: nevertheless he may shut them up in this CAGE for a long Time, as a Punishment to themselves, and a Warning to others. Let us then be watchful against a backsliding Heart, lest we find it *a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.*

While *we* take Warning, let us be careful of reading Judgments where God has not wrote them. Awful Despair is not
always

always the Consequence of Guilt and Backsliding. I have known some to speak the Language of this Man, who were not guilty of Declension from the Ways of GOD: lowliness of Spirits arising from bodily Disorder, great Temptations, and great Tenderness of Conscience concerning Sin, have made them for a Season, think their Case to be desperate, and they have accordingly refused all Comfort: but the LORD has afterward brought them out of Prison and made them to rejoice.

The last Scene was awful, yet as we have shewn, not hopeless: but should that be realized in us, which the Man DREAMED was his Case, it will indeed be awful and hopeless too: for the Day of Judgment to come, and we not be ready; how shall we stand the Terrors of that Day? *The LORD shall be revealed from Heaven*, in all that dreadful Pomp and Majesty which the Scriptures have mentioned: let us then anticipate the Time, and remember the Account we have to give. How shall we feel, to see the Angels gather up the Elect, and leave us behind—for the Pit to open its Mouth near us—for our Consciences to afflict us—for the Judge, with indignant Countenance, to fix his Eye upon us:—Oh
GOD!

God ! the Idea is insupportable ! what then will the Reality be ? may a frequent Meditation of the Solemnity and Certainty of that Day induce us *to labour, that we may be accepted* of our Judge : that this may be the Lot of SYNTYCHE and himself ; is the prayer of

ANDRONICUS.

L E T T E R VI.

IMRESSED with Hope and Fear, each of which have their proper Use in a Christian's Experience ; let us attend our Pilgrim in his Way : and may the COMFORTER be always with us, to guide us right.

When our Hearts are penetrated by Divine Truths, we endeavour to *run the Way of God's Commandments*, yet, while Sin hangs heavy on the Soul, it will be with some Difficulty : but when God *enlarges the Heart*, we *run without Weariness and walk without fainting*.

Salvation will GOD appoint for Walls and Bulwarks. Whether therefore, we hold on our Way, with Weariness, or Alacrity, the LORD is our Defence on the Right Hand
and

and on the Left, and the Belief of this excites and encourages to Perseverance. LORD, *I have hoped for thy Salvation, and have done thy Commandments.*

The Way of Salvation by JESUS CHRIST, brings us to his Cross and Sepulchre, where Guilt is removed and Sin buried. The Cross is the Christian's Glory; because *it is the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God to his Salvation:* by looking here, the heaviest Burden is removed everlastingly out of Sight; for Faith, though like a Grain, removes Mountains: this Sight gives a merry Heart with a weeping Eye. We rejoice, and sing, *He loved me: he gave himself for me:* yet while we look upon him whom we have pierced, we mourn with Meltings of Heart for him. What is there in this Sight to produce such wonderful Effects? What does it shew us? *That the LORD laid upon him the Iniquity of us all—that he was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities: the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and by his Stripes we were healed: he gave himself for our Sins—he put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself—he redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.*

“ And

" And was the Ransom paid? it was: And paid
 " (What can exalt the Bounty more?) for *You*.
 " The Sun beheld it—No, the shocking Scene
 " Drove back his Chariot: Midnight veil'd his Face.
 " Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's Pain? or start
 " At that enormous Load of human Guilt, [Cross;
 " Which bow'd his blessed Head; o'erwhelm'd his
 " Made groan the Centre, burst Earth's marble Womb.
 " With Pangs, strange Pangs! delivered of her Dead!
 " Hellhowl'd—and Heaven that Hour let fall a Tear:
 " Heaven wept, that Man might smile: Heaven bled
 " Might never die!—— [that Man
 " For Guilt, not Innocence, his Life he pour'd;
 " 'Tis Guilt alone can justify his Death:
 " Nor that unless his Death can justify
 " Relenting Guilt, in Heaven's indulgent Sight.
 " If sick of Folly, I relent; he writes
 " My Name in Heaven, with that inverted Spear
 " (A Spear deep dipp'd in Blood) which pierc'd his
 " And open'd there a Fount for all Mankind [Side,
 " Who strive, who combat Crimes, to drink and live:
 " *This*, only *this* subdues the Fear of Death.
 " And what is *this*?—Survey the wondrous Care
 " And at each Step let higher Wonders rise:
 " Pardon for infinite Offence! and Pardon
 " Thro' Means that speaks its Value infinite!
 " A Pardon bought with Blood! with Blood Divine
 " With Blood Divine of him I made my Foe!
 " Persisted to provoke! tho' woo'd and aw'd,
 " Blest, and chastis'd, a flagrant Rebel still!
 " A Rebel, 'midst the Thunders of his Throne!
 " Nor I alone! a Rebel Universe!
 " My Species up in Arms! not one exempt!
 " Yet for the Foulest of the foul, he dies,
 " Most joy'd, for the Redeem'd from deepest Guilt!
 Oh!

Oh! my SYNTYCHE, what a Song is this for *the House of our Pilgrimage!* we have often, and shall again, if our Journey be long, hang our *Harps upon the Willows:* but at Times, through Mercy, it will be our Song: and when we get above, we shall join the grand Chorus, *Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, who hath redeemed us to God by his Blood.*

From this Source arises those capital Privileges represented by the three *shining Ones; Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins—Acceptance in his Righteousness, which is unto all, and upon all who believe—The Sealing of the Holy Spirit of God, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance,* and therefore to be delivered in as our CERTIFICATE, at the CELESTIAL GATE. May we be tenderly watchful and careful that *we grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by which we are sealed unto the Day of Redemption.* This Pledge of Divine Love preserved, our Interest in the others will be apparent; when this is clouded, they become doubtful.

Under a Profession of Religion, we meet with many Characters that are not Christian Characters; but are a Grief and Concern

cern to the Godly. CHRISTIAN sees three Men—they were “a little out of the Way—they were fast asleep—they had Fetters on their Heels.” Their Names, SIMPLE, SLOTH, and PRESUMPTION, Names descriptive of their Properties, as *loving Darkeness rather than Light because their Deeds were evil.* A Contentedness in gross Ignorance, an Indolence which smothers all Conviction, and a carnal Security which hardens against Reproof, have been the Ruin of many. Alas! how do these Characters abound, even where the Gospel is preached! but what is their Danger? why, they are out of the Way, and though but a little, they are out of it. If the Way means a serious and decent Profession of Religion, as I suppose it does; none who are destitute of this, can have a Grain of that. Again, they are asleep, destitute of all proper Concern about their State: how then can they *fly from the Wrath to come?* they have Fetters upon their Heels, they are “tied and bound with the Chains of their Sins,” which is, the Badge of their Condemnation, and the Prevention of their Escape.

Every Endeavour to awaken, and deliver these wretched ones, is the Duty, and will

will be the Practice of those who know the Worth of Souls; but alas! how often in vain? Well, my dear Friend, let them teach us to keep in the Way, and to walk in it with Watchfulness, Diligence, and godly Fear.

Formalists and Hypocrites are classed together, because, though they differ in their Principles, their Practice is the same. The Former is a Self-deceiver, because he thinks God is as well pleased with his Attention to Forms of Religion, as he is himself: the Latter deceives others, by pretending to be what he knows in his own Heart he is not. Vainglory is the Motive of both, to be praised. Now the Similarity of their Conduct is, their both assuming a Profession of Religion according to their own Fancy, and not by the Rule of the Word; they Leap the Fence, instead of coming in at the Gate; they presume upon their own Sagacity to carry them through their Undertaking; and being equally ignorant of what constitutes a real Christian, they treat his Experience as the Effect of Enthusiasm. In one Thing more they agree, which is, to quit the right Way as soon as it becomes inconvenient to them
to

to continue in it; though they differ in the Choice of their particular Paths.

The Hill which the Pilgrim came to was steep and high. The narrow Way lay right up the Hill, and was called DIFFICULTY: two Ways branched off at the Bottom, which seemed as if they would round the Hill to meet the strait Path on the other Side: the one was named DANGER, and the other DESTRUCTION; here FORMALIST and HYPOCRISY agreeing to leave the right Way of the LORD, each choose their own Delusions.

FORMALIST takes the Path called DANGER, which led him into a great Wood, where we must leave him, if peradventure Mercy may find him: because FORMALITY, though a dangerous State; yet, as it is founded in Mistakes which may consist with a Degree of Honesty and Well-meaning; appears to be a recoverable State: the LORD may open their Eyes to the Insufficiency of outward Forms, and his Grace may deliver them from the Bewilderings of human Inventions: but let us not forget that Formality in Religion is very dangerous.

HYPOCRISY

HYPOCRISY takes the Path to DESTRUCTION, which leads him into a wide Field full of dark Mountains, where he stumbled, fell, and rose NO MORE: *the Hope of the Hypocrite shall perish*; their Insincerity often bewilders them in this World; they are entangled in their own Net, detected, and manifested; and so exposed to the Contempt, even of the Ungodly, that they are obliged to drop the Mask of Religion, to avoid continued Infamy: when this is not the Case, they carry on the Farce to the End; *the Day shall declare them*.

I do not recollect, SYNTYCHE, that in all the Scriptures there is one Instance on Record, of the Conversion of a HYPOCRITE. It seems to me, as if HYPOCRISY, when the leading Character, baffled even the Power of Grace, and that the Word could not penetrate a dishonest Heart. How awful! how truly awful and tremendous, those Words of JESUS, after he had exposed this vile Abomination in the Pharisees! *O Generation of Vipers! How can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?*

HYPOCRISY is an Attempt to deceive others, either by a verbal, or practical Lie, or both: yet every Degree of it does not

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constitute a **HYPOCRITE**. A Vice must be habitual and permanent to constitute a Character. Good Men, by the Scripture Account, have, through Weakness, Fear, or Temptation, dissembled ; but they were no Hypocrites. The Character our Author is mentioning, is pretty plainly marked and distinct from these.

May the good LORD, keep us in the *Power*, as well as *Form of Godliness*, may we *be sincere and without Rebuke until the Day of CHRIST*, prays thy

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER VII.

AS it was impossible for CHRISTIAN to hold Fellowship with FORMALIST and HYPOCRISY, he kept on before them, often reading in his ROLL by which he was refreshed : to teach us that good Men condemn by their Example, as well as by their Testimony, the Ways of Transgressors ; and when they cannot enjoy edifying Converse

Converse with others, it is their Wisdom to *Commune with their own Hearts, and for their Spirits to make diligent Search*; to examine their Evidences, and see wherein Grace has made them to differ from others: this, though it may cause some Sighs to burst from their Hearts, will, upon the Whole, be a Comfort and Refreshment.

Uphill Work, they say, is hard Work; but this is the Way a Christian must go to the Kingdom of God, even up the Hill DIFFICULTY. Whether Mr. BUNYAN designed to figure out any particular Species of Trial, I know not; but am inclined to think he meant this general Instruction, that the Way of a Believer is sometimes attended with Difficulties, which try his Strength to his utmost Exertion. CHRISTIAN fell from running to going, and from going to clambering upon his Hands and Knees, because of the Steepness of the Place; hence the Propriety of that Exhortation, *Be not slothful, but Followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.*

Mark, my dear Friend, the tender Mercy of the LORD: *as no Man goeth a Warfare at his own Charges*, so the LORD, when he

calls us to Difficulties and Labours, grants more than ordinary Supplies of his Spirit and Grace. *He that bath Mercy on them shall lead them, even by the Springs of Water shall he guide them.* CHRISTIAN takes a refreshing Draught before he begins to climb the Hill: *the Joy of the LORD is his Strength*, and he goes up the Hill singing. Let us sing too, my fellow Traveller, as having tasted of the same Spring:

“ So when my Spirit drinks her fill,

“ At some good Word of thine:

“ Not mighty Men that share the Spoil,

“ Have Joys compar'd to mine.

In the Midst of Trials and Difficulties, the LORD does not forget his People. About the Midway to the Top of the Hill, was a pleasant Arbour, made by the LORD of the Hill, for the Refreshing of weary Travellers: there CHRISTIAN sat down to rest him. The LORD is *a Shelter from the Heat*, as well as *a Covert from the Storm*: *I will be*, says he, *a little Sanctuary to them, in all Places whither I shall lead them.* The Remembrance of his dying Love, and living Care, is a sweet Refreshment in the Hour of Weariness, and the Thought of what he will do, makes present Afflictions seem light.

“ Whose

“ Whoſo after Reſt enquires ?

“ Let him to CHRIST's Blood approach :

“ Whoſo perfect Peace deſires ?

“ JESUS' Blood affordeth ſuch.

“ Here, my Soul, ſit down,

“ Truſting in his Blood : and prove

“ What the LORD for thee hath done :

“ Fathom, if thou canſt, his Love.”

How pleaſant is it, under a Senſe of the Love of CHRIST, to examine our Intereſt in him, and our Title to his Glory. So CHRISTIAN did: he pulled his ROLL out of his Boſom, and read therein to his Comfort; he alſo reviewed his COAT that was given him at the CROSS. When, ſtrange to tell, while thus pleaſing himſelf, he began to flumber, and at laſt fell faſt aſleep, till it was almoſt Night; and in his ſleep, his ROLL dropped out of his Hand.

Who could have ſuſpected ſuch an Accident in ſuch a Place, and in ſuch an Employment. Alas! my dear SYNTYCHE, it is not only neceſſary to watch againſt the Devil and the World, but againſt our fooliſh Selves; for it often befalls us as it did CHRISTIAN: pleaſed with a View of what the Lord has done for us, inſtead of humbly and thankfully adoring the Giver, we reſt ſatiſfied in his Gifts, and fall into a vain ſelf Complacency of Mind. While we thus ſhine in our own Eyes, we remit our

Watchfulness, fall into a Spirit of Security, and carnal Confidence, which obscures our Evidences for Heaven.

Fresh Calls to Duty, awaken a Believer to Diligence, but it is the Fear of Danger, that generally turns him within himself to see that all is right. When MISTRUST and TIMEROUS, alarm CHRISTIAN with the Report of Lions in the Way, he has Recourse to his ROLL for Comfort.

Mark the Difference, SYNTYCHE, betwixt a Believer and *the Fearful and Unbelieving*: the Latter, at the Appearance of Danger, turn back; their coward Hearts dare not so much as examine the Danger they fear, but they decline from the Ways of GOD, with greater Speed than they ever walked in them. How different the Former! he fears indeed, but he believes, and reasons from Principles of Truth: "If I go back to my own Country, *that* is prepared for Fire and Brimstone, and I shall certainly perish there: if I can get to the celestial City, I am sure to be in safety: I *must* venture. To go back is Death, to go forward is Fear of Death, and Life everlasting beyond it: I *will* yet go forward." He that dwelleth on high, and regardeth the Ways of Men, has said, *He that*

that overcometh shall inherit all Things: I will be his God, and he shall be my Son. But the Fearful and Unbelieving shall have their Part in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death.

CHRISTIAN, in his Fear, as we observed, sought to his ROLL for Comfort. It had been rash indeed, and presumptuously foolhardy, to have proceeded in his Way, without Evidence, that he might expect, and wait for the Salvation of the LORD. He sought, but he found it not: his neglected, grieved, gracious LORD, had withdrawn his witnessing Presence, when the foolish Pilgrim became so pleased with himself, that he forgot his Obligations to his best Friend. What must he do? Why he must sorrowfully tread back all the Steps he had thoughtlessly trod without it.

Our Author has beautifully represented, the Tears, the Sorrows, the bitter Self-reflections of that Repentance which succeeds Backsliding in Heart; and taught us, that to recover the spiritual Blessings which we have lost, we must trace our Way back by Self-examination, to the Sin by which we lost them: for what is lost by Folly, must be regained in Sorrow.

It is very common for young Christians to do as the Pilgrim did. They contemplate their Privileges, till their Hearts are elated with Joy : a Survey of the Evidences of the Love of God to them, intoxicates them with a foolish Pride and vain Confidence, as though they enjoyed a Partiality in the Divine Favour. If we search for the Reason, I believe the Following will not be wide off the Mark. The Joy arising from the Removal of Guilt by Faith in the Blood of CHRIST, and from the Thought of Justification, Acceptance, &c. &c. so absorbs the Mind, that under our first Love, little else is attended to by us. All depraved Affections lay dormant, and being yet ignorant of the deep Corruption of our Hearts; we are ready to believe those depraved Affections are destroyed. We think ourselves already saved, and that, allowing for the Trials of this mortal State, we have Nothing to do but to sing our Way to Heaven; and *be bath loved me*, becomes our Song. Thus delighted with our present Comforts, and ignorant of future Danger, we are like Children just learning to go alone; pleased with the new Acquisition of the Use of their Feet, they
are

are giddy and heedless, till Falls and Bruises make them more careful.

ALEXIS had lately *tasted that the LORD is gracious*: he sought EPIPHANES, an aged and experienced Saint, to whom he related the happy Change he had experienced; and enlarged and expatiated much, on the present Joy of his Heart. EPIPHANES smiled, but resuming his Gravity, My Child, said the good old Man, attend to what I am going to say: do not imagine that it will always be thus with you: you are like a Child whom the Nurse caresses, and encourages to try the Use of its Feet: she supports and leads it by the Hand—she slackens her Hold, and suffers it to stumble to make it careful: God, my Friend, is taking *Ephraim by the Hand, and teaching him to go*; he must, by and by, go alone: the present Supports of Consolation will be withdrawn, or perhaps sinned away: then, do not be surpris'd, ALEXIS, if you meet with some humbling Proofs of your own Weakness, and take care you do not fall to the breaking of your Bones. ALEXIS then thought this Lecture very needless, but Time taught him that EPIPHANES spoke Truth.

Let us retire, my Friend, from this little Digression, and attend our Pilgrim: he has gotten his ROLL again, and with Tears of Joy, laid it up in his Bosom. The LORD *heals our Backslidings, and loves us freely*, but leaves us to reap the Fruit of our Folly, to shew his Displeasure against it; and to make us careful in Time to come, he withdraws for a Time his comfortable Presence, and leaves us to grapple with our Fears of Danger.

Two Objects now claim our Attention, the House BEAUTIFUL, and the LIONS. Of the Former, we will only say at present, that it represents Christian Communion in Gospel Ordinances, and speak more fully of it hereafter. Of the Latter, that it relates to the Difficulty of enjoying those Privileges in Mr. BUNYAN's Days. The LIONS denote the CIVIL and ECCLESIASTICAL Powers, which then roared like Lions against those who sought to worship God in a Way which they believed more agreeable to his Word, than the Forms established by Law. The LIONS were chained, to shew, that persecuting Powers were always under Divine Controul, which said, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther*: they were used by the Almighty for the Trial of his Children's

drens' Faith and Faithfulness. For faithless Professors, *when Tribulation, and Persecutions, arise because of the Word, they are offended and fall away*: When FAITHFUL passed by them, they were asleep: by which perhaps the Author alludes to the Time wherein King James the Second claimed and exercised a Power to suspend the Laws.

But what of the LIONS now, SYNTYCHE? blessed be GOD, you reply, they are not only chained, but muzzled too: for though the penal Statutes are not formally repealed, the Act of Toleration prevents their Mischief. I add further, my dear Friend, they are removed out of our Way; no Lions bar our Passage to the House of God. Our Assemblies are numerous, full, and without Fear: and our Posterity likely to enjoy for Generations to come, the Privileges, Doctrines, and Ordinances, our Fathers have handed down to us, as the Purchase of their Property and Blood.

The less difficult Providence makes our Duty, the more diligent should we be. The blessed Liberty of the present Day, encreases our Obligations to the LORD, and to one another; our Duties to both are free from Danger. *Use not your Liberty,* says

the Apostle; *as an Occasion to the Flesh, but by Love serve one another.* May the Beauties of Holiness, adorn our Profession of Religion, and the pouring out of God's Spirit render us abundantly fruitful in the Ways of Zion.

Nothing in this earthly State can claim Perfection: every Good has its Alloy. I hope I am not mistaken, when I suppose that the Extension of CHRIST's Kingdom has been great amongst us, as a Consequence of our civil Liberty. I think the great Number of religious Societies established of late Years, is a Proof of it: at the same Time, what Shoals of Hypocrites and false Prophets thrust themselves into our Societies, being no longer deterred from Fear of the Lions. It is easy, cheap, and almost fashionable to be religious. Let the LORD's Servants be careful, and distinguish themselves by an exemplary Zeal for their Redeemer's Service—an exemplary Holiness of Life and Conversation—an exemplary Love to one another, and Benevolence towards all Men.

False Professors and Hypocrites will then, in general be manifested and stand confest, and so will the Servants of the LORD, whose
Glory

Glory it will be to distinguish themselves as such. The Day is coming, when their Master, *who honours those that honour him*, will declare his Approbation of them before an assembled World; and own and reward their Kindness to him, though in the Person of the least of his Brethren.

That the Divine Spirit may enable SYNTYCHE and myself, to make a suitable Improvement of present Mercies and Privileges, is the sincere and devout Wish of

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER VIII.

COME, my SYNTYCHE, let us go to the House on the Hill, the House BEAUTIFUL: the earthly Palace of the KING of Kings. *Beautiful for Situation, the Joy of the whole Earth is Mount Zion, GOD is known in her Palaces for a Refuge.* Here may we dwell, till we remove to the higher Mansions, which JESUS has prepared for us above. Let our Wish coincide with David's: *One Thing, says he,*
have

have I desired of the LORD; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the House of the LORD all the Days of my Life, to behold the Beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his Temple. Let us attend to the Foundation, Laws, and Ordinances of this House, the Qualifications of those that are admitted into it, and of those that admit.

We have considered Christianity hitherto as a solitary Character, we are now going to consider it in a social Point of View: Christians, by Fellowship in the Gospel, become Helpers of each other's Holiness, Faith, and Joy. In this Point of View we lose Sight of parochial Church Connection, and remembering, that *where the Carcase is, there will the Eagles be gathered together*; we consider CHRIST as a Son over his own House; whose House we are, if we hold fast, the Confidence and the Rejoicing of the Hope, firm unto the End. Such Fellowship then is voluntary, and arises from union of Hearts in the Things of God.

Our Author gives his beautiful House a Porter, whose Name is WATCHFUL: to shew us that Ministers who preside in such Societies should be vigilant, they are to watch for the Souls of Men, and they must
give

give Account to their Master, of all entrusted to their Care. They are to watch over those of the Household—to warn them that are Unruly—to comfort the Feeble-minded—to reprove, comfort, admonish, and exhort, with all Longsuffering, and Doctrine. They are to watch the Door of the House, that none enter, if they can prevent, but such for whom the LORD built the House: and particularly to watch for those that are afraid to come forward, and comfort and encourage them: For though it is true that there are no Lions now to deter them, yet many humble Souls are so diffident, modest, and fearful, on account of their Unworthiness; that they need much Encouragement to join in the Communion of Saints.

Such a Porter was ARCADIVS, of whom we have often conversed with Pleasure and Affection; but he is gone to receive from the Chief Shepherd, the Crown of Glory that *fadeth not away.* You remember with what Kindness he noted all within the Circle of his Ministry, that appeared to be seeking the LORD: how he *exhorted, comforted, and charged them, as a Father doth his Children; that they would walk worthy of God, who had called them to his Kingdom and Glory, and sel-*

dom

dom failed of being the Means of planting them in the House of the LORD. You knew his Tendernefs, Watchfulnefs, and Care over the Members of his Society—he knew their perfonal and family Trials and Temptations, and was their Friend and Counfellor—he sympathifed with them in all their Sorrows and Afflictions; and faithfully, yet tenderly, reprov'd their Faults—he was careful to promote their Fellowship in the Intervals of their public Affemblies, by affociating them in fmall Parties from Houfe to Houfe, according to their Vicinities, for the Purpofe of Prayer and holy Conference. Such was ARCADIVS, and he was honoured and beloved accordingly.

None are fit Subjects for religious Societies, but fuch as have fet their Faces in earneft toward the Kingdom of God; have been convinced of their loft State and Condition; have obtained Faith in the LORD JESUS, and known fomething of the Comforts and Trials of the Way: fuch will freely relate the Way in which they have walked; taking fhame to themfelves for their Wanderings, and giving Glory to God for his Mercies.

PIETY, PRUDENCE, and CHARITY, are neceffary Qualifications in Members of religious

ligious Societies, when judging of those who seek to be admitted amongst them ; lest they should receive the specious Hypocrite through his fair seeming ;—and reject the humble and sincere Christian, because of some Failings and Weaknesses.

PIETY, PRUDENCE, and CHARITY, are further necessary, no comfortable Fellowship can be had without them : PIETY will cause us to promote whatever tends to the Glory of God, and the Edification of Believers : it will prompt to a willing, and frequent Practice of those social religious Duties, which fan the Fire of Devotion, and keep it alive in one another's Hearts. PRUDENCE is necessary for avoiding Matters of Offence, or laying of Stumbling-blocks in each other's Way : it sometimes requires much PRUDENCE to do this ; what through remaining Ignorance, Prejudices, Weaknesses of Mind, and Oddities of Temper, Christians have large Scope for the Exercise of PRUDENCE towards one another : and they will do well to attend to the Directions given on this Head, in the Epistles to the Churches. I need not recite them to SYNTYCHE, whose Prudence preserves his own Peace, and promotes that of his Brethren,

thren, having learned of an Apostle, to be of one Mind with them in the LORD.

CHARITY ! how excellent art thou : the Glory of Graces, giving Energy and Vigour to every Duty : thy Duration and thy Office are eternal : when Faith is lost in Sight, and Hope in Possession, CHARITY remaineth to constitute the happy Fellowship of the general Assembly and Church of the First-born : to make Heaven itself a comfortable State and Place. CHARITY softens the Rigours and soothes the Sorrows of the present State : it relieves Wants : it covers a Multitude of Transgressions : it preserves Harmony, or restores it when broken : it is the Source of ten thousand Benefits : therefore the Apostle Paul calls it *the fulfilling of the Law* : and the Apostle John urges it, as the supreme Proof, both to ourselves and others, of real Religion in the Heart.

“ Hence may all our Actions flow,
 “ Love the Proof that CHRIST we know;
 “ Mutual Love our Token be,
 “ LORD, that we belong to thee!

“ Love, thine Image, Love impart,
 “ Stamp it fully on each Heart;
 “ Only Love to us be giv’n,
 “ LORD, we ask no other Heaven.”

As

As Love is the heavenly Cement which unites the Children of God, in their Communion in Gospel Ordinances, so it unites different Societies of Christians, of different Modes of Worship in one Spirit of Amity ; and renders dear to each other, *all in every Place that call upon the Name of the LORD JESUS, and love him in Sincerity and Truth.* It prevents our forbidding those who follow not JESUS with us : and teaches us to rejoice in the Progress of true Godliness, and the Extension of CHRIST's Kingdom. It anticipates that State where Persons of very different Sentiments in some Particulars here, shall dwell together in everlasting Harmony.

“ Love, like Death, hath all destroy'd,

“ Render'd all Distinctions void :

“ Names, and Sects, and Parties fall,

“ Thou, O CHRIST, are All in All.

The Ordinances of God's House are appointed for the Instruction and Comfort of his People : and his Glory rests upon them when they communicate in, and enjoy those Ordinances, as Children of the same Family, Members of the same Body, Partakers of the same Faith, and Heirs of the same Glory. How delightful it is to
hear

hear in the public Ministry, to see in the
 holy Sacraments; and to converse among
 themselves, of the Love of their LORD, mani-
 fested in what he has done, is now doing,
 and will do for them: to do this, not only
 with Sentiments of personal Devotion; but
 to have a higher Relish from the Consider-
 ation of common Interest with others.
 Worldly Goods are Property to the Ex-
 clusion of others; hence they contract the
 Heart to Selfishness, and excite it to Covet-
 ousness, because the more is possessed by
 one, the less is left for another: not so the
 Things of God, we can never be the poor-
 er for Ought that is possessed by another;
 but we may be richer: JESUS is never the
 poorer for having so many Millions Joint-
 heirs with him. *We are Heirs together of
 the Promises, not Co-heirs, but Joint-heirs.*
 In the former Case we must divide the In-
 heritance, in the Latter, we have all Things
 common; neither saith any Man, that
 Ought of the Things, which he possesseth
 are his own, to the Exclusion of another's
 Right; *There is one Body, and one Spirit;*
even as we are called in one Hope of our Cal-
ling: one LORD, one Faith, one Baptism, one
GOD and FATHER of all, who is above all,
and

and through all, and in all. There is a Difference among Believers as to actual Enjoyment, but no Difference as to Right: for *to every Man is given according to the Measure of the Gift of CHRIST.* All may possess the same Grace, and in the same Degree, if they seek and ask it in the Way their LORD has appointed. All our Straitness is in our own Bowels or Desires.

The large upper Chamber in the House BEAUTIFUL, where the Pilgrim was laid to rest, and which was named PEACE; seems to me to denote, that a peaceful Spirit and Disposition, contributes greatly to the Comfort, and is a lovely Ornament to social Religion. The Window opened toward the Sun-rising, to shew that Peace promotes that Growth in the Knowledge of the LORD, which makes *the Path of the Just to be like the shining Light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect Day*: but Debates, Disputations, and Contentions, shut out the Light of Truth, and wrap up the Heart in its own Prejudices, for we are naturally tenacious of that which another seeks to divest us of.

There are, undoubtedly, foundation Truths, in which Persons must agree, in order

order to comfortable Communion: but there are also Circumstantials in which they may harmlessly differ, and in which, from the Nature of the present State, they must and will differ. The Features of Mens Faces, are not more various than their Modes of thinking, on one and the same Subject. SOPATER supposes NEREUS to be mistaken, because he differs in some Opinions from him: he attacks his supposed Errors: NEREUS defends them: they dispute and wrangle, till they despise, and even judge one another: yet SOPATER and NEREUS both profess to believe each other Children of God: then why not bear with each other, and follow the apostolic Advice, *Be at Peace among yourselves?*

I have read and studied, I hope with some Profit, that inimitable Lecture upon this Subject, which the Apostle Paul gives the believing Romans, in the fourteenth, and the first seven Verses of the fifteenth Chapters of the Epistle to that Church. I never read it without being struck with its Importance to the Peace of God's Children; nor without admiring the Divine Wisdom, and gracious Spirit which pervades it. As the Passage is too long to be transcribed in-

to a Letter, I wish SYNTYCHE, to lay down this Paper, for a Moment, and to turn to the Passage and read it.

Should my Friend charge me with Tautology, and say that these Things are included in, and are the Works of Christian Charity: I agree with him: I am convinced they are essential Parts of it. I apologize therefore, for my supposed Tautology, by observing; that there are too many Professors, whose narrow Spirits, and unbearing Dispositions, plainly indicate that these Things make no Part of *their* Idea of Christian Love: for *their* Sakes therefore, if these Letters should ever meet their Eye, as well as for yours, whose Heart I wish to be expanded and enlarged with all the Philanthropy of the Gospel; I have enlarged on these Things: I say then with the Apostle, *to write unto you the same Things, to me is not grievous, and for you it is safe.*

The STUDY, or LIBRARY of the House BEAUTIFUL, is undoubtedly the Scriptures of Truth, they are also the ARMOURY, from whence Believers are supplied, as CHRISTIAN was, with those *Weapons of Warfare which are not carnal, but mighty through God.* This manifold Use of the Bible

Bible should endear it to us, and make it our best beloved Companion in private: and its extensive Application for Instruction, Warning, and Consolation, both by Precept and Example, should lead us to prefer the Reading and expounding it in our Assemblies, as the best Means of Edification; it was the Mode in the primitive Churches, and appears from Scripture itself, to have been the Practice of the Jewish Church. Its peculiar Advantages above Preaching always from a single Text, are apparent; as it tends to lead the Hearers into a more general Knowledge of, and Acquaintance with the Scriptures at large.

There is something strikingly beautiful in the Manner in which Mr. BUNYAN introduces *the Rod of Moses, Jael's Hammer and Nail, Gideon's Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets, &c. &c.* historical Examples, which serve to awaken our Sense of Dependence on the LORD, and encourage our Confidence in him. The greatest and most important Events, were brought about and effected, by Instruments most unlikely, because, in themselves insufficient for the Purpose: they owed all their Efficacy to his Appointment, and never failed, when used

used in Faith and Obedience to his Will: but weak as they were when God had enjoined their Use, nothing could be effected without them.

Prophecy is a Part of the sacred Records, designed to animate our Faith and Hope, by teaching us to look forward to the Glories of the latter Days; when the Spread of the Gospel, the Encrease of the Knowledge of God, through the Outpouring of the Spirit; and the LORD's suitably disposing and ordering the Affairs of the World, shall cause such a glorious Extension of the Kingdom of CHRIST, as shall infinitely surpass the present State. For all Things in his Kingdom must grow and advance towards their Perfection. The Contemplation of these Prophecies, in Connection with Promises of Grace, encourages us, to look forward, to greater Privileges and richer Experiences for Ourselves than we have yet attained. This I suppose was the Top of the House, from whence CHRISTIAN saw EMANUEL's Land. I refer my dear SYNTYCHE to the Thirty-third of Isaiah, from the fifteenth Verse to the End, for a Prophecy of this kind, and remain his affectionate

ANDRONICUS.

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L E T.

LETTER IX.

FROM the Blessings and Privileges of social Religion, let us attend our Pilgrim into his private Life and Experience again; armed, and accoutred for his Way. All the Knowledge and Strength we get in Ordinances, is given for our Assistance in Times of Need: the LORD has wisely hid from us, what those particular Times may be, and only warned us of the evil Day, that we may *put on the whole Armour of God, that we may be able then to stand.*

The Valley of HUMILIATION, into which the Pilgrim descends, is to shew us, that GOD sometimes causes those who are dear to him, to share the Poverty, as well as the Riches of their Master. He not only calls *the Poor of this World*, to be rich in Faith; but with the same gracious Design, he abases those whom he has called in more exalted Circumstances. His Servant JOB, *the greatest of all the Men of the East*, he permitted to be stripped of his Goods, his Children, and his Health. His was a Valley

ley of Humiliation indeed ! It has been the Lot of many a Believer, to experience in different Measures, a similar Debasement, and to come down from Affluence to Poverty, and from Respectability to Neglect, perhaps Contempt.

It is hard to go down into this Valley, and catch no Slip by the Way. To see one's Substance *melt like Wax before the Fire*—one's Schemes and Endeavours to procure *honest Things*, frustrated and defeated—the kindest Intentions of our Hearts operating to one's Hurt, through the Machinations of the Artful and Designing—to fall a Prey to the Wicked and Oppressive—to see one's Friends stand aloof from our Help—and to feel one's Self in helpless Indigence, without visible Resources. These, my SYNTYCHE, are hard Trials to the Flesh; and it would be much indeed to come down from Affluence to this Condition, without stumbling. Our Corruptions are stirred up : our Pride, Impatience, Repining, Unbelief, Rebellion, and other Evils of the Heart are brought to Light ; so that, what with Sin within, and Trouble without, we find our Situation truly uncomfortable.

In such Circumstances, we need the Assistance of PIETY, DISCRETION, CHARITY,

and PRUDENCE. What little Share we have of these Graces ourselves, we have abundant Call for the Exercise of, to keep us from quarrelling both with God and Man, or doing that which is unlawful or inconvenient; and it is ten thousand to one if we wholly escape doing some of these Things.

We need Assistance also from the PIETY, DISCRETION, CHARITY, and PRUDENCE of others; to advise, admonish, comfort and help us; to preserve us from sinning; and to alleviate our Sorrows. This is one of the Blessings for which the Communion of Saints was appointed: and he, who is forsaken by Christian, as well as by Carnal Friends, is humbled indeed. CHRISTIAN found the Company of his Associates, a Help, in going down the Hill, and their Present, a suitable Refreshment, before he got through the Valley.

Our Humiliation may spring from various Causes: our own Misconduct and Folly, through want of Watchfulness, may betray us into the Power of our Enemies, whose Tongues in such a Case will have no Mercy upon our Character and Reputation. Our Connection with, or Relationship to those who have acted improperly, often exposes

us to severe Mortifications, and covers us with Shame: but whatever are the Things that bring us down into this Valley, I believe it will be found, that Poverty, or the Loss of worldly Goods, is the most humiliating of all.

No doubt, the Designs of our heavenly Father, in leading us into humiliating Situations, are wise and gracious: and either the Correction, or Removal, of Something evil in us; or our Improvement and Growth in the Graces of his SPIRIT; are the Ends to be obtained by our Visitation. We are prone to love the Creature too much, and to be proud of the Gifts of Providence, even to a Forgetfulness of our absolute Dependence for them. Our Love to God, Faith in him for providential Blessings, and our Bowels of Mercy for suffering Indigence; are too often in prosperity, far different from what they should be. *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.* Too often in acquiring worldly Good, *we sacrifice to our own Net, and burn Incense to our own Drag;* our own Wisdom, Prudence, and Diligence. Hence a want of proper Gratitude to God, and hard Thoughts, perhaps severe Censure of those who are not so successful as ourselves.

God breaks the *Cisterns* we have hewn to ourselves, that we may return to him, *the Fountain of living Waters*: he takes away from us that which by our too great Fondness for it, alienated our Hearts from him, and drew our *Affections from Things above*: he puts a Thorn in our Nest, to awaken us to Remembrance, that, *this is not our Rest, because it is polluted.*

To live with God by the Day, in a Way of Dependence for earthly Good, is as much our Duty in Prosperity, as Adversity; and to ascribe that Prosperity, to any Thing but his Blessing, is insolent Ingratitude. He takes away his Gifts, to remind us that he gave them; and to let us see, and feel, to the aching of our Hearts, how little our Prudence and Diligence could do, toward our Prosperity, without his Blessing, when our utmost Exertions of both avail Nothing to preserve the Things that are melting away from our Hands. *In vain we rise up early, sit up late, and eat the Bread of Carefulness: Except the LORD keep the City, the Watchman watcheth in vain.*

As a Want of proper Sympathy for those who are low, is too often the Sin of those who are exalted; God, *who visits the Proud,*
and

and gives Grace to the Humble, leads the Proud down into the Valley, that Experience may teach them, and feelingly too, the Condescensions and Benevolence that is due to Sufferers.

It is Love, the kindest paternal Love of God thus to mortify our foolish Pride, to break our false Confidences, and to make *us* feel, what *our* Thoughtlessness, may have made others feel: and when the LORD the Spirit, adds his Grace, to make deep Impressions on our Hearts, from abasing Providences. We are compelled to say, *It was good for me to be afflicted; before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy Way.*

But though the Children of God are sometimes debased in worldly Things, by Way of Chastisement; this is not always the Case: some of his Children live always in the Valley: *for God has chosen the Poor of this World, to be rich in Faith, and Heirs of his Kingdom.* Many an excellent Saint, have all their Life long, eat Bread earned by the *Sweat of their Brow*, while they were able to Work; or received it from the Bounty of others, when Weakness or Age, prevented their Labour.

It seems also, that the LORD brings down some into the Valley of HUMILIATION, to

exercise and perfect their Faith and Patience: and to exemplify, and manifest his tender Love and Care of them, in their Support and Maintainance. Never did Paul appear to greater Advantage, as a Christian, than when deprived of the Support of his manual Labour, and obliged, through his Bonds at Rome, to accept the Bounty of the Philippians; he declares his Acquiescence in the Lot his Master chose for him. Let us hear him, SYNTYCHE, for greater Words cannot come from Lip or Pen. *I have learned in whatsoever State I am, therewith to be content, I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all Things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer Need: I can do all Things through CHRIST which strengtheneth me.*

Many, yea, a Multitude of the Promises of GOD, might be expunged from the Bible, if there was no Valley of Humiliation: Promises, which give us the most pleasing Ideas of God, as the great Parent of all, whose *tender Mercies are over all his Works*; and who is OUR GOD and FATHER through the LORD JESUS CHRIST. These are proposed to our Faith, but Faith must be tried,

tried, or it can never be more precious than tried Gold. It is easy to talk of trusting to the LORD, when we can help ourselves, *out of the Barn-floor, and out of the Wine-press*; but to pray, *Give us this Day our daily Bread*, and not know where it will come from—to believe that God will give it in Consequence of his Promise, is Faith indeed—Faith, which glorifies God, and exalts his Word. I will add, my SYNTYCHE, from Experience, that such a Life of Faith, though crucifying to carnal Pride, has Fruits attending it, far more Sweet, far more Delicious, than the Blessings of Affluence: none know, my Friend, but those who have felt them, the pleasing Sentiments of Joy, Gratitude, and Love, which the Heart feels, when our Supplies come in answer to Faith and Prayer, through unsuspected Means, which indicate the immediate Influence of God.

We see in Paul, that such a Faith, is always accompanied with its meek-eyed Sister Patience: a Grace, which gives us the Possession of our own Souls, and makes us rich with whatever Portion our heavenly Father gives us. It saves us from the bitter Pangs of thwarted Pride, in present

Abasement; and Heart-harrowing Distresses, arising from future Prospects. *It is good therefore for a Man to hope, and quietly to wait for the LORD: but the Heart of the Wicked is like the troubled Sea, which casteth up Mire and Dirt.* Happy they who come down with a good Grace: Who humble themselves under the mighty Hand of GOD, that he may exalt them in due Time.

Adieu, SYNTYCHE: that you may prove Godliness with Contentment to be great Gain, is the Prayer of your

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER X.

WE are told, my dear Friend, that *our Adversary the Devil, goeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour: and that we must resist him, steadfast in the Faith: as the Traveller, whose Path is infested with Beasts of Prey, behoves to travel warily; so are we exhorted to be sober and vigilant, lest the Enemy of Souls should surprise*

surprise us. Satan's Enmity to Jesus, and to the Purchase of his Blood, will not permit one Soul to escape to Glory, without their having some Brushes with him by the Way. The Captain of Salvation also, who was tempted in all Points like unto us, permits it to be so, that his Glory may be manifested in succouring the Tempted; and Satan be confounded, through the Fidelity of Saints.

The Temptations of Satan are various, and variously conducted; some of them are insidious and artful, and calculated to deceive: such was the Temptation by which Eve was seduced, and with such he tried our LORD in the Wilderness: in others he is like a roaring Lion, intimidating and terrifying his Prey, he appears all Devil as he is, and endeavours to carry his Point by dint of Storm: such was *the Hour and Power of Darknes* with which our JESUS grappled in the Garden.

IN CHRISTIAN'S Encounter with APOLLION, our Author is giving us a metaphorical Description of these Temptations: he has judiciously made the Valley of Humiliation the Scene of Action; because, the Slips we have made in coming down the

Hill—the Murmuring, Discontent, and Repinings of our Hearts, not only leave Guilt upon us, but also afford him Matter for Accusation. He also chooses to assault us at a Time when our Spirits are weak and broken with Affliction, that we may be the more easily intimidated, and make the less Resistance.

CHRISTIAN is described as a Soldier armed Cap-a-pee for Battle. “He was harnessed from Head to Foot, lest perhaps he should meet with Assaults by the Way.” In this Description, the Author has closely followed the Apostle Paul, who twice describes the Believer, as a Soldier armed for Combat, and his Arms as necessary to enable him to stand his Ground in the evil Day. This evil Day is, without Doubt, a Time of sore Temptation, and the Conflict of it is described by the Believer defending himself with *Shield* and *Sword*, against *the fiery Darts of the Devil*.

The Description of APOLLION is terrible: the dreadful Imagery is collected from various Parts of Scripture, where the Attributes of the most terrible Animals are given him: the Attributes of Leviathan, the Dragon, the Lion, and the Bear: to de-

note

note his Pride, his Rage, his Courage, and Cruelty. Oh, my SYNTYCHE, those who have encountered him, have proved him terrible. My Heart, even now, shudders at the Remembrance of the dreadful Conflicts myself have had ; and at those which have been related to me by others, whose Lot it was to be exposed to the fierce Assaults of this terrible One: " No Man can tell what that Combat is, but those who have been in the Battle themselves."

It is not the Lot of every Believer, to conflict with such sore Temptations, indeed of but few comparatively. Our gracious LORD, who has the Key of the bottomless Pit, and holds the Dragon's Chain in his Hand, will not suffer him to do all his hellish Disposition prompts him to. May my SYNTYCHE be exempted from this Warfare : but as no one knows what is yet to come, before his Journey ends ; we will attend to CHRISTIAN'S Combat with APOLLION : that if our KING should suffer him to cross your Way, you may not think *some strange Thing has happened to you.*

With regard to some kinds of Temptations, our best Wisdom is to fly : *Flee youthful Lusts—come out from among them and be seperate*

separate—touch not the unclean Thing, &c. but Satan must be *resisted*: we have no Armour for our Backs. Not to resist this Enemy, is to render useless, Faith, Hope, the Word of God, and the Power of Prayer: and to lay ourselves open to inevitable Despair, as the natural Effect of *these* Temptations: for Satan's End in them is to make us suppose we never did belong to God; or else, that God has forsaken us for ever.

Mark, my dear Friend, the Gradation of Temptation, as it appears in the Dialogue, before the Combatants come to close Quarters: and mark too, the Considerations by which such evil Suggestions of Satan should be repelled.

The Profits of the World, and the Pleasures of Sin, are held out as an Allurement.

The Apostacy of others is suggested, as what will probably be our own Conduct: that we shall never hold out to the End, therefore it is as well to give up our Profession now.

The Difficulties, Dangers, and Sufferings of the LORD's People, are contrasted with the Safety and Prosperity of Sinners.

The Recollection of our Sins and Backslidings, under a Profession of Religion.

The Supposition that all our Profession of Religion is founded in Pride and Vain-glory.

Sug-

Suggestions of this kind, backed by the Testimony of our own Consciences, that the Charges of present Sins and past Backslidings, have too much of Truth, serve to afflict and derange the Mind at the same Time. For, the Accuser of the Brethren, when he applies to the Work of Accusation, never fails to place every Sin in the most aggravating Point of View, and to follow up his Charges by such incessant Repetition, that we may truly say, *My Sin is ever before me.*

Our Tranquillity disturbed and broken, the Enemy pursues us with evil Thoughts of every kind, injected so fast and frequent, as to interrupt and hinder us in every Duty. Many a poor Child of God, has been so beset, and pestered with them, in Prayer, reading, and hearing the Word, and even in the Management of his ordinary Calling; that it was as if APOLLION straddled quite across his Way, and stopped him from going on.

“ Swarms of ill Thoughts their Bane diffuse,

“ Proud, envious, false, unclean,

“ And every ransack'd Corner shews,

“ Some unsuspected Sin.”

How grievous and distressing, my SYNTYCHE, must it be to a Believer, seeking
God's

GOD's Face in Ordinances, to be perpetually harrassed with Thoughts, that seem to fill his Mind with Impiety instead of Devotion, and present Images to his Imagination, which shock and defile him at the same Time: too often has Satan by this Means prevailed with the Soul, to leave off Duty for fear of increasing Transgression, and divested it of every Capacity for Prayer, but that of broken, short, Ejaculations.

" LORD, Hell's fierce Hunter me pursues,

" Strongly he holds my Soul in Chase:

" Left he, his mark'd out Prey should lose,

" He waits for me in every Place:

" O Jacob's tender Saviour charge the Foe,

" Hurt not my Anointed, let my Servant go.

Many of the Temptations by which the Soul is harrassed, are properly called, the *fiery Darts of the Devil*: *Darts*, because suddenly injected: and *fiery*, because they seem to inflame us with every Thing infernal. Well might poor CHRISTIAN sigh and groan as if his Heart would break, while he was engaged in this Conflict; for none can conceive but those who have felt it, what it is. Those who are *at Ease in Zion*, are ready to look upon all this as Chimera and Imagination: and even some
 Chrif-

Christians who never experienced it, are ready to suspect, that much of it is owing to meer natural Causes. That some Infirmities and Diseases, may so affect the Bodily Organs, as to have a strange Influence on the Conceptions of the Mind, is granted: and we will speak more of this by and by: but this cannot be the Case, where the Body is in good Health, and the Powers of the Mind possess their Vigour. I would ask, if this is all Imagination, What are *the fiery Darts of the Devil?* and what their Effect?

That such Things are, we must infer from the Exhortation, to take the *Shield of Faith* as the best Defence against them: and by the Term *all*, we are led to suppose these Temptations many.

CHRISTIAN was wounded in his Head, Hand, and Foot, which made him give a little back. Great Allowances are to be made for Persons under Temptations: from the Perturbation of their Minds they may judge, speak, and act amiss: it would be next to a Miracle if they did not. It is the Nature of Temptation, and the Design of Satan, to cause such Errors in Judgment and Conduct, as may affect the Walk and Con-

Conversation in some Degree. No Man, not the greatest Saint, is invulnerable: none but JESUS ever came out of this Conflict unwounded, because none but he can say, *The Prince of this World cometh, and hath Nothing in me.* And so hard did he find the Conflict, that he is said to *have Compassion on those that are tempted, to be touched with a Feeling of their Infirmities, for that he, himself, hath suffered, being tempted.*

He who speaks of Satan's *fiery Darts*, speaks also of *wrestling with Principalities and Powers, with spiritual Wickedness in high Places.* Wrestling is a closer Conflict than fighting at Arm's-length, and much more arduous. While a Believer can keep his Enemy at Sword's Point, can repulse him as JESUS did, with, *thus it is written*; though he may be wounded, he will stand his Ground: but who can stand, when the Enemy closes in with us, and wrestles with us with sudden strong Temptation to some Sin? Ah poor David! Peter! and many others! what dreadful falls! even to the breaking of the Bones. O God, enable us to watch, and keep our Enemy at Sword's Point! Teach us to manage Sword and Shield, so to believe and apply thy Word,
that

that we may be able to beat off our cruel
Foe, and quench his fiery Darts ! Alas !
how pitiable is the Case of a Soul thus fallen,
held down by Satan and his own Guilt !

But perhaps our Author does not mean by
CHRISTIAN'S Fall, to intimate a Believer's
being overcome by Temptation, so as to
sin, though this is often the Case ; but that
a Believer, by sore Temptation, may fall
under the Power of Unbelief : in such a
Case, his Sword may well fly out of his
Hand : for of what Use is the Word of
GOD, when we have lost our Confidence in
it ? Such an one must be *pressed out of Mea-
sure, above Strength, to despair even of Life.*

INVINCIBLE GRACE ! how glorious is thy
triumph ! " I am sure of thee now," cried
the exulting APOLLION ; but soon " he
spread his Dragon's Wings and sped him
away." Victory is often nearest, when Ruin
only appears in sight. Determined Re-
solution to hold fast our Confidence, though
with a feeble, dying Hand, must at last
prevail ; for *if God be for us, who can be
against us ?*

CHRISTIAN is described as combating
APOLLION without any Aid or Assistance ;
he seems entirely left to the Courage of his
Heart,

Heart,' and his Skill in the Use of his Arms; to shew us, that tempted Souls are insensible of that Grace by which they are assisted: even the Tempter may think them left of God: he too may say, *God has forsaken him, persecute and take him, for there are none to deliver him:* But was this the Case, how deplorable would be the Lot of the Tempted!

The Captain of our Salvation loves us too well, and bought us too dearly, to desert us in Danger: *To deliver his Peoples' Souls to the Lion, his Darlings to the Power of the Dog.* It is he, in us, maintains the Conflict, and secures the Victory; and his Grace is exalted, for *we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us.*

Three Things I observe, as a Close to this Allegory of strong Temptation. First, the Wounds our Conscience receive in such Conflicts, can only be healed by a believing Application of the Benefits of CHRIST, as held forth in the Gospel: his Spirit brings near the Word, which Faith receives and applies: for only that Blood which was shed for Sin, will avail to the Healing of the Wounds of Conscience. Secondly, the LORD the Spirit, graciously
revives

revives and strengthens the Soul by the precious Promises; they not only heal, but Comfort. God's Word sustains us like Bread, and cheers us like Wine, and the Weariness and Sorrow we have endured, renders Consolation doubly sweet. Thirdly, Our Temptations should make us more upon our Guard, in general they do so: while we *remember the Wormwood and the Gall, our Souls are humble*; but in a while we forget: did we always watch with that Wariness which we watch with just after Temptation, it would not be so much in the Power of our Enemy to attack us by Surprise.

When we look back upon this Field of Battle, can we help looking up to God, with that Prayer which our Master has taught us: *LORD, lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil. Amen,* says thy

ANDRONICUS.

L E T-

L E T T E R X L

WE are now, my dear Friend, to attend our Pilgrim through other Difficulties, through Scenes of Woe: we are to travel with him through *a Wilderuess, a Land of Deserts and of Pits; a Land of Drought and of the Shadow of Death; a Land that no Man (but a Christian) passeth through, and where no Man dwells.* This is the scriptural Account of it, and therefore the true one: but let us hear what those Cowards say, who turn from the Ways of the LORD, and bring up an evil Report of them, to justify their own Cowardice: that Seed of the Spies, who slandered God's earthly Canaan; and who, like their Father's, *shall die in the Wilderuess* for their Punishment, *and never enter into his Rest.*

“The Valley itself,” say they, “is dark as Pitch: we also saw there, the Hobgoblins, Satyrs, and Dragons of the Pit—we heard also in that Valley, a continual Howling and Yelling, as of People under unutterable Anguish, who there sit bound in
Afflic-

Affliction and Irons; over the Valley hangs the discouraging Clouds of *Confusion*: Death also doth always spread his Wings over it. In a Word, it is every Whit dreadful, being utterly without Order."

This is the Account of those who *choose the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, rather than to suffer Affliction with the People of God*. Exaggerated to the Utmost, and embellished with the most frightful Imagery, to terrify the Mind: to all such, the Reply of the Pilgrim should be ours. "I perceive not yet," said he, "by what you have said, but that this is my Way to the desired Haven."

LORD, what a wretched Land is this,

That yields us no Supply,

No chearing Fruits, no wholesome Trees,

No Streams of living Joy.

Yet the dear Path to thine Abode

Lies through this horrid Land:

LORD! we would keep that heavenly Road,

And run at thy Command.

By glimmering Hopes, and gloomy Fears,

We trace the sacred Road,

Through dismal Deeps, and dangerous Snares,

We make our Way to GOD.

You ask me, SYNTYCHE, what is this Valley of the SHADOW of DEATH? I answer,
it

it does not seem applicable, fully so, to any particular Stage of the Christian Life; but is an Aggregate of almost all the Temptations and Trials the Godly meet with in their Way to Heaven. I am inclinable to this Opinion, from the Author's taking his Description of this Valley, from the Prophet Jeremiah's Description of the Desert, through which Israel passed to Canaan; and in that, he makes it a particular Stage of CHRISTIAN'S Journey, it is to shew, that there are Seasons in which God's Children are involved in many Afflictions, both outward and inward at once: but to shew that this is not the common Lot, we find, that though poor CHRISTIAN had great Darknes, Frights and Fears, FAITHFUL had Sunshine, and CHRISTIANA and her Company, had Daylight thro' this Valley.

CHRISTIAN had Darknes through half the Valley, he had not the Consolations of God's Spirit to support him under Trials; when this is the Case, Afflictions are doubly heavy. The sensible Presence of God, and the lively Exertions of Faith, blunts the Edge of Tribulation, lightens our Burdens, and dissipates our Fears. The LORD'S Presence with the Soul gives Light
within,

within, though his Providences may be very dark without: in such a Case, the Believer may sing, for God gives him a Song in the Night.

- “ Though I walk through the gloomy Vale,
- “ Where Death and all its Terrors are,
- “ My Heart and Hope shall never fail,
- “ For God my Shepherd’s with me there.
- “ Amidst the Darknefs and the Deepes,
- “ Thou art my Comfort, Thou my Stay;
- “ Thy Staff supports my feeble Steps,
- “ Thy Rod directs my doubtful Way.”

Happy they who are thus favoured, but the noblest Exercise of Faith is to *Trust in the LORD, and stay ourselves upon our God, while we walk in Darknefs and see no Light.* This, *he that fears the LORD, and obeys the Voice of his Servant,* is exhorted to do, under the firmest Persuasion, that God *will never leave him nor forsake him: he may boldly say, The LORD is my Helper, I will not fear what Man shall do unto me.* - Such are safe, though they are not Comfortable, and walk in the Ways of God with Steadiness, though somewhat heavily.

But their Case is truly melancholy, who not only want sensible Comfort in their Afflictions, but have their Faith weak, and their Fears strong; and are at the same

F Time,

Time, assaulted with many and sore Temptations: this made poor CHRISTIAN sigh bitterly. The Narrowness of his Path, added to his Distress, for fear of the DITCH and the QUAG: a tender Conscience is equally afraid of dishonouring and displeasing GOD, either by Presumption or Despair.

But come, my SYNTYCHE, let us look into this DITCH and this QUAG, which so sorely put poor CHRISTIAN to it. The DITCH is it, into which *the Blind have led the Blind* in all Ages, and have both there miserably perished. This Character of Blindness is what JESUS CHRIST gave to the Pharisees, and their deluded Followers: to the Former, because they taught their own Inventions and Traditions, and *made void the Commandment of GOD*; to the Latter, for believing them, without seeking after the Truth. JESUS gives them this Appellation from the Prophets, who thus describe the false Prophets of their Day. *Their Tongue and their Doing, is against the LORD, to provoke the Eyes of his Glory; for the Leaders of this People cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed. The Prophets prophecy falsely, and my People love to have it so, and what will they do in the End?* Presumptuously departing from

from the Rule of GOD's Word, is the Sin here pointed out; and the Ditch is the Perdition into which such Persons fall.

Should you object here, that Blindness is the Metaphor for Ignorance, and that Sins of Ignorance are not Presumption; I answer, the Blindness does not relate to the Conduct, but the Consequence. Let these Gentry speak for themselves, *I shall have Peace*, say they, *though I walk in the Imagination of an evil Heart, to add Drunkenness to Thirst*: they know that they offend, but they flatter themselves with Impunity.

A Christian, walking in Darknes, and at the same Time compassed about with Trouble, is in Danger at least, of being tempted to presumptuous Sins. Hence that Prayer, *Keep back thy Servant from presumptuous Sins*.

As to the QUAG, David shall inform us, for he was in it: *I sink*, said he, *in deep Mire, where there is no standing, I am come into deep Waters where the Floods overflow me: I am weary of my crying, my Throat is dried, mine Eyes fail while I wait for my GOD*. And when he speaks of his Deliverance, he says, *He drew me up out of the horrible Pit, and out of the miry Clay*. This Description points out a State of Mind affectingly distressing, in

which the Christian's Hope *is as the giving up of the Ghost*: and this Distress arises from a deep Sense of Guilt and Unworthiness; without a proportionate View of the free Grace of God, and the boundless Merit of the Blood of CHRIST.

Let us keep in Mind, SYNTYCHE, that our Pilgrim was in a State of Darknes, and that his Difficulty of avoiding the DITCH and the QUAG, arose from this Circumstance: had it been Light, Care would have been necessary, for the Path was very narrow. Indeed, my dear Friend, though Presumption and Despair, seem to be opposites, the Transition from one to the other, is very short; it is nothing more than the turn of a Thought.

Reflect, my SYNTYCHE, that the Path which the Gospel marks out, is the middle Line between Legality and Antinomianism: in other Words, between ascribing to the Law, too much or too little. Let us exemplify this.

By Legality, we mean such a Regard to the Law, as leads us to look to it for Consolation; but our Consolation must flow only from the Gospel, which testifies of Justification, and that *freely, through the Redemp-*

tion which is in JESUS CHRIST. We ascribe therefore too much to the Law: if we expect from it a Ground of Confidence.

By Antinomianism, we understand ascribing too little to the Law; inferring from the Doctrines of Grace, such a Release from the Law, as absolutely annihilates all its Authority over us; and consequently we cease to judge of, and try ourselves by it.

Now let us mark the Midway between the two, namely, the proper Use of both Law and Gospel. The Former is the Rule of our Conduct, for *we are not without Law to GOD, but under a Law to CHRIST*: the Latter is the Ground of our Confidence and Hope, as it holds forth to us, *Redemption in the Blood of CHRIST, the Forgiveness of Sins.* If while we seek to this for Comfort, we cease to regard our Obligations to the Law, as a Rule of Life; we expose ourselves to Temptation and Sin, and verge towards the DITCH. If we lose Sight of the Hope of the Gospel, and look to the Law for Comfort; the Sense of inward Pollution and outward Imperfection, overwhelms us with Guilt, and we sink into the QUAG.

To one that walks in the Light of GOD's Countenance, it may be said, *Let thine Eyes*

look right on before thee, and thine Eyelids ponder the Path of thy Feet. He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely:- But a Soul in Darkness, and agitated with Temptations and Troubles, finds it is not so easy to keep in the Middle of the Path: he feels his agitated Heart continually inclined to presume, or to despair.

This Subject affords a Reflection, which is not sufficiently attended to by the LORD's People: it is this, that when we feel least the Consolations of the Gospel, we may have the most unequivocal Marks and Evidences of the Truth of Grace. Most Persons talk of a comfortable Evidence of their State, and are distressed when they are without Comfort, as if they had lost their Evidence. Such Persons would do well to recollect, that Comforts are the most equivocal of all Evidences—that the Stoney-ground Hearers had them, yet had *no Root in themselves*. But mark poor CHRISTIAN, in the Valley of the SHADOW OF DEATH, involved in Darkness and Trouble! what is his Care and Anxiety? It is to keep in the Way: it is to avoid presuming on the Goodness of God on one Hand; or, doubting of that Goodness on the other.

Mark

Mark his Fears, Care, and Caution—see how warily he treads: Can you hesitate, SYNTYCHE, to affirm that *this Man has the Root of the Matter in him?*

We proceed now to a Species of Temptations which are peculiar, and which many of GOD's People know nothing about: and I Trust, in a short Time, they will none of them know any Thing of them. It is that kind of Temptation, which is allegorised by CHRISTIAN's passing by the Mouth of Hell, and imagining that he heard a Company of Fiends coming towards him. Two Things, I apprehend, concured to give Satan an Advantage to distress and terrify many of the LORD's People formerly. Mankind, till lately, were in the almost universal Belief of the Existence of Witches, and the visible Appearance of DEVILS, HOBGOBLINS, and GHOSTS: a Faith, which naturally engendered Fears and Terrors in the Mind: and as the Godly were equally under the Power of these Prejudices with others; it afforded SATAN frequent Opportunities to terrify and distress them. The Persons most liable to these Harrassings, were those who were naturally subject to lowness of Spirits, or

whose Spirits, were made low and broken by Trouble : Satan availed himself of their bodily Indisposition and Prejudices, to attack and poison their very Faculties, to cloud and disturb their Imaginations, and fill them with Terrors.

When burning for Witchcraft ceased, the very Idea of Witches began to die away : so, as the Belief of Apparitions has subsided, and the human Imagination is no longer subject to Terror upon that Account ; it would be almost a Miracle to meet with a Saint who has seen the Devil.

But what, my SYNTYCHE, must those dear Souls have suffered, whose Imaginations were tortured by his Illusions ? and how deep the Malice of that cursed Spirit, who delighted thus to torment them. Rejoice with me, Friend, that his Game is spoiled in this Respect, and the Day is coming, when their LORD will avenge *them*, and suitable Reward *bim* for his infernal Pranks. LORD, cut short his Reign in every Respect, and by thy Word and Spirit, *destroy all the Works of the-Devil*. So pray with thy

ANDRONICUS.

L E T-

L E T T E R XII.

FRRIEND of my Heart, it is thy happy Lot not to have known, nor to have been harrassed by the *Depths of Satan*: hitherto the Shepherd *has gathered thee with his Arm, and carried thee in his Bosom*; thy Way has been mostly tranquil, and thy Trials and Temptations comparatively light. Thou oughtest not to be ignorant of *Satan's Devices*, for two Reasons, that thou mayest be upon thy Guard against an Hour of Temptation, and know how to pity those that are tempted.

There is another View of Temptation included in our Author's Metaphor, and which by him is interwoven with the Former; but I have separated them for your Instruction, and because I have known them to exist separately. The Subjects of this Temptation, are also Persons of low Spirits, either naturally so, or through Affliction; and their Trial is exceeding great.

The usual Progress of this Temptation I have marked to be nearly as follows:

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the Tempter begins in his Character of Accuser of the Brethren, and as such Persons are much addicted to melancholy Musing, he recalls to their Remembrance, all former Sins and Backslidings, of which they have repented, and afterward walked in Communion with God: he suggests, that present Trouble, and the hiding of God's Face; is the Controversy of God against them for Sin, and perhaps the Earnest of everlasting Punishment: thus he begets in the Soul the Fear of perishing for ever.

Fears thus created, are supported and increased, by Assaults upon the Imagination, which under bodily Weakness, or mental Depression, is peculiarly impressive. Thoughts of the most horrid, blasphemous, and unclean Nature, pester the Mind, and pollute the Ideas, often to the irritating the depraved Affections and corrupt Propensities. Self-examination tends but to increase the Distress, because the Consciousness in too many Respects agrees with the Temptation from without:

“ Oh! the Pangs by Christians felt,

“ When their Eyes are open;

“ When they see the Gulph of Guilt

“ They must wade and grope in:

“ When

- " When the Hell appears within;
 " Causing bitter Anguish;
 " And the loathsome Stench of Sin
 " Makes the Spirit languish.
 " Now the Heart disclos'd, betrays
 " All its hid Disorders;
 " Enmity to God's right Ways,
 " Blasphemies and Murders;
 " Malice, Envy, Lust, and Pride,
 " Thoughts obscene and filthy,
 " Sores, corrupt and putrified,
 " No Part sound or healthy."
 " All Things to promote our Fall,
 " Shew a mighty Fitness,
 " Satan will accuse withall,
 " And the Conscience witness."

You cannot, my dear Friend, suppose it
 a difficult Matter for SATAN to persuade
 such, at least at Times, that GOD has for-
 saken them, and given them up to their
 own Vileness: and consequently to impress
 the Imagination with the most terrifying
 Ideas of his Vengeance, especially as they
 are not able to distinguish between, the Sug-
 gestions of SATAN, and their own native
 Thoughts.

To reason with, or attempt to comfort
 such Persons, is almost in vain: because
 they suppose their Case peculiar, and that
 no one was ever like them, unless deserted
 and

and cast off by the LORD; if indeed they meet with, or hear of any whose Experience bears, or has borne, a Similarity with theirs, the poor disconsolate Heart, receives a gleam of Hope; but nothing can remove their Distress, till the LORD *lifts up the Light of his Countenance* upon them, and *turns the Shadow of Death into the Morning.*

It has been objected against calling such a State as this, a State of Temptation; that it is inconceivable how SATAN can gain access to our Spirits, so as to give Motion to our Thoughts, and make Impressions upon our Imaginations: such Objectors therefore plead, that this Distress must arise from meer natural Causes; such as bodily Disorders, affecting or deranging the Mind: that if the Cause can be removed by Medicine the Effect will cease.

That bodily Disorder may be the Cause of Melancholy or Madness, I can readily agree: but at the same Time, I plead that Persons melancholy or mad, are tenacious of the Thoughts which feed their Disorder: but the Tempted would gladly get rid of his, he hates and abhors those evil Thoughts which arise in his Mind, and endeavours to put them away: he prays and strives against them

them with all his Might : that bodily Disorder may sometimes be the Cause, is not disputed, but it is only a secondary one, and by which the Tempter gains an Advantage.

It is argued, that it is inconceivable how the Enemy of Souls can have access to our Spirits. I argue in return, that for a Thing to be inconceivable, does not disprove its Reality; we know so little of the Nature of Spirits, that it is no Wonder we should be unable to describe their Mode of Operation: we know, that is, every serious Person does know, that in sound Health and good animal Spirits, oftentimes Thoughts which we hate, and which distress and terrify us, arise in the Mind; but we are able to resist them and they pass away, we cannot suppose them to arise from ourselves, because they shock us with their Contrariety, even to our natural Inclinations. It is easy then to conceive that the Effect of such Thoughts must be great upon a weak and sickly Mind.

If bodily Disorders were the sole Cause of the Distresses we are treating of; the Removal of these Distresses would be analogous with the Removal of their Cause, which is gradual; but the Contrary is generally the Case; the Deliverance is mostly sudden and
instan-

instantaneous, as if the LORD designed to bar all Dispute of its being his own Work.

If I may be allowed to conjecture what are SATAN'S Ends and Designs in these Temptations, I suppose them to be the Following: To drive the Tempted to seek Relief by unlawful Means—to confirm the Report of the Ungodly, that Religion is a melancholy Business, and thereby deter and frighten them from venturing upon it, and to stagger the Faith even of the Godly themselves.

If it be asked why the LORD permits any of his Children to be thus tempted; I answer, from the general Tenor of Scripture, that it is *for the Trial of their Faith*. Four important Ends are answered by this Trial; God is glorified in his Faithfulness to his Promise, in not suffering his Saints to be *tempted more than they can bear, and in every Temptation making a Way for their Escape*. Secondly, God is glorified in the Fidelity and Love of his tried Servants, whom no Hardships can fright, or turn away from the Path of Holiness. Thirdly, Such Trials tend much to the future Steadiness, Comfort, and Usefulness of Saints. Peter lost Nothing by being sifted in SATAN'S
SIEVE;

SIEVE; but his Temerity and Self-confidence. And Fourthly, It is the sore Mortification and Vexation of SATAN, to be foiled and trodden down, by those he seeks to destroy. Disappointed Malice suffers the severest Pangs. I ought to add a Fifth, The SONG OF HEAVEN will be, *They overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Testimony.*

Well, my dear SYNTYCHE, you see the Way to HEAVEN is not only strait and narrow, but to some of the LORD's Servants, it is peculiarly rugged: Be not discouraged: but *learn to endure Hardness as a good Soldier of JESUS CHRIST*; for though *Affliction for the Present is grievous, it worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* Ponderous Crowns are reserved in Heaven for tempted Saints: if such have the bitterest Lot on Earth, they will have the brightest Crowns in Heaven, and approach nearest in celestial Splendor to the CAPTAIN of their Salvation, who was himself *made perfect through Sufferings.*

The Morning being come, CHRISTIAN looked back, and had a more perfect View of the Dangers he had passed through. Nothing, my dear Friend, so much affects
the

the Mind of a Believer, as a Retrospect of his Way, it affects him with Gratitude and Wonder. The Command to Israel was, *Thou shalt remember all the Way which the LORD thy GOD hath led thee, these forty Years in the Wilderuess, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine Heart, whether thou would keep his Commandments or no.* Such a Retrospect, is the brightest Comment on those Words, *who are kept by the Power of GOD through Faith unto Salvation.*

The Season of Deliverance from great Temptation, is not an Exemption from other Difficulties. Watchfulness and Prayer are still necessary: the Pilgrim's Way, after the Sun arose, was, if possible, more dangerous than before; set full of Snares, Traps, Gins, Nets, &c. that had it been Dark, if he had had a thousand Souls, they had in Reason been cast away; but the Sun was risen: you remember, SYNTYCHE, that though the Sun was risen, our Pilgrim was yet in the Valley of the SHADOW OF DEATH, a State of accumulated Trouble and Afflictions. It is said, *Many are the Troubles of the Righteous.* Now every Species of Trouble has its peculiar Snares and Difficulties; and it seems, from our Author's Manner,

as if he thought, that the Tribulations which sometimes befall us about worldly Things, are more dangerous to our Souls than the Temptations of SATAN: for ought I know, he may be right, because these Things most powerfully strike our Senses, which are our most vulnerable Parts; but the Presence of God, keeps us alive to Courage, Watchfulness, and Patience. How precious therefore that Promise, *I will lead the Blind by a Way which they know not, I will lead them in Paths which they have not known: I will make Darkness Light before them, and crooked Things straight: these Things will I do unto them, and not forsake them, saith the LORD.*

The Cave of POPE and PAGAN, at the End of the Valley—the Blood, Bones, Ashes, and mangled Bodies of Men, are to remind us how much greater the Trials of those who have gone before us were, in Comparison of ours: besides, the Temptations of SATAN, and the Troubles of the Flesh; they jeopardied their Lives for CHRIST: Providence remits us that Part of the Cross at present. Paganism is dead here, and Popery old, and crippled: Nothing remains but the historical Monuments of *their* cruel Massacres. Alas! my
 dear

dear Country ! would to God it could not be said to thee, since the Departure of Paganism and Popery ; *The Blood of the Innocent is found in thy Skirts, not by a secret Search, but upon thy Princes, Priests, and Rulers.* Let us draw a Veil over the Infamy of PROTESTANT PERSECUTION, at least for the present, and bless JEHOVAH, who *has broken the Arrow and the Bow.*

To the Conduct of his Grace, I commend my dear Friend, wishing him the Divine Presence in Prosperity and Adversity. and remain his Affectionate

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XIII.

TO have Communion with Saints in Ordinances, is a blessed Privilege, because entitled to a gracious Promise. *Wherever two or three, says the Redeemer, are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the Midst of them.* This Privilege tends much

much to general Edification, Comfort, and Instruction: but there are Circumstances arising in our Christian Course, which we cannot bring forward before a religious Society; in which, nevertheless, we need Counsel and Assistance.

Our gracious Master has set us a Pattern of Conduct in this Respect. It is to attach ourselves to one or more, whose Properties and Dispositions are such, that we can cordially and unreservedly, unite with them in close and intimate Friendship. *JESUS* loved all his Disciples, he loved them tenderly: but there were a few who appear to have been distinguished from the rest, by a close and intimate Friendship. *Now JESUS loved Martha, and her Sister, and Lazarus.* These appear to have been a happy Family in one another; united in Bonds of sacred Friendship, as well as the Ties of Blood; and peculiarly happy in having their great Master a Party in their Friendship. These Sisters, therefore, when their Brother *Lazarus* was sick, sent a Message to *JESUS*, couched in Terms, which only the strictest Friendship, and closest Intimacy would admit of: *LORD, he whom thou lovest is sick.*

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The Recorder of this sacred Friendship, as if emulous that Mankind to the End of the World should know that his Heart was attached to JESUS, by every possible Bond; informs us, at the Close of his Gospel, that he himself was emphatically distinguished by the Appellation of *the Disciple whom JESUS loved*: and by the peculiar Circumstance of occupying the Place of special Intimacy, that of *Leaning on the LORD's Breast* at Supper, and taking the Liberty to ask a Question which none of the other Disciples presumed to ask, though they wished to do it: LORD, *which is he that betrayeth thee?*

The Gospel, while it opens the Heart with a Divine Philanthropy towards all Mankind, and unites the Hearts of Believers in pure Affection, for their Redeemer's Sake—does not forbid—says Nothing to discourage, but rather offers Motives for close, particular, personal Friendship amongst Individuals: the Master himself has sanctified the Practice by his own Example.

The Benefits of Friendship are great and many: half the good Things that are done in the World, arise from the particular
Likings

Likings and Regards that Men have for one another. David had not escaped being destroyed by Saul, if *Jonathan had not loved him as his own Soul.*

The Blessings of Christian Friendship are ten thousand fold. For *as Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doth a Man the Countenance of his Friend by hearty Counsel.* Cordial Affection, and unreserved Confidence, opens the Way to, and impells the Parties to a peculiar Fellowship in each other's Joys and Sorrows, and forms their Hearts to mutual Endeavours towards each other's Welfare, in all Things both spiritual and temporal. My Heart retains the pleasing Remembrance, of the dear and valuable Benefits it enjoyed in Friendship with SYNTYCHE, when Providence placed our Habitations nearer each other; and now, I bless God for the Consolation I receive from his Letters, in these Days of Darkness and Affliction; Days of Sorrow which almost overwhelm me.

Our Pilgrim finds a Friend and Companion in his beloved FAITHFUL: and our Author, by letting us hear their Conversation, and see their affectionate Conduct toward each other, gives us a lovely Picture
of

of that Fellowship which Saints, enjoy whose Hearts are united to each other in Bonds of Amity.

The Gospel exhorts to Emulation, and Friendship is a Spur to it. FAITHFUL, though he set out after CHRISTIAN, had out-gone him, and when the other first saw him, was considerably before him in the Way. Some of God's People grow faster than others, either from their being more diligent, or meeting with fewer Hindrances. It is remarkable that FAITHFUL stopped nowhere to rest him, nor did he meet with any Conflicts that detained him long: He is the Characteristic of that strong and steady Faith which holds on its Way without Intermission: nor, when CHRISTIAN called after him, could he be induced to wait, though for the Blessing of a Companion.

Similarity in our Degrees in Grace is desirable, because Equality is the Soul of Union; but those who are behind, ought not to expect those who have surpassed them, either to stop, or come back for them: to condescend to, and bear with the Infirmities of the Weak, is one Thing, to sink into their Weaknesses is another. FAITHFUL's Answer is in Point, "No,"
said

said he, "I am upon my Life, and the Avenger of Blood is behind me." We must therefore strive to gain the Eminence of those we wish to have for Companions; and perhaps, like CHRISTIAN, we may even exceed them.

Alas! SYNTYCHE, how many are our Dangers from this depraved Nature of ours; even our spiritual Attainments may become a Source of Vainglory. Humility is the Guard of every other Grace; but when we begin to think we are something great, we are in danger of falling, if not already fallen. The grieved Spirit, withdraws his sacred Influences, and to humble our Pride, leaves us to ourselves. We stumble and fall, and are glad of the Comfort and Counsel, not only of those our Emulation has outstripped, but even of the weakest Believer, whose Attainments we have thought poor in Comparison with our own.

Accidents of this kind, if I may presume to call them by that Name, often serve to temper our Spirits to that Pity, Patience, and Forbearance, necessary to walk as Companions with others. When FAITHFUL had helped up his fallen Brother, they went on very lovingly together. Now let us attend
to

to their Conversation, and first of the City of DESTRUCTION, from whence they came.

There was a great Talk in that City after CHRISTIAN left it, of the Judgments that did hang over it; but none forsook it save FAITHFUL. So have I known, my SYNTYCHE, the Preaching of the Word in many Places where it was new, beget a Deal of Conversation, seemingly in the Way of Approbation and Faith; but the Result shewed that but few believed it. Notion and Faith are very different Things.

Next come we to Neighbour PLIABLE, who told good CHRISTIAN "he should possess the brave Country alone for him." A pliable Disposition is sometimes an unprincipled one; which bends with the Times, and often loses its own Ends, which are Advantage, by doing so. To escape Wrath, and attain Glory, are Objects that may attract a carnal Mind, especially Persons of a soft and pliable Disposition, and consequently, they begin a Profession of Religion; but when Difficulties and Trials come in the Way of the alluring Blessings, they fall away. Our LORD says, *The evil Spirit goeth out of Man—but, he saith, I will return again to my own House, whence I came out—so he returneth,*

turneth, and taketh to himself seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, so the last State of that Man is worse than the first. These Fools think to make their Peace with the World, by shewing a more than ordinary Dislike to Religion. But the World always sneers at an abortive Undertaking, whether it is friendly or inimical to the Object pursued.

It is therefore a just Judgment of God, to give up the PLIABLES to the Contempt which their Cowardice deserves. JESUS CHRIST does not conceal the Cross from the Eyes of Men, if they will not see it till they feel it, who is to blame? His Words are plain—*Whoever doth not bear his Cross and come after me, cannot be my Disciple. For which of you intending to build a Tower sitteth not down first and counteth the Cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it, lest haply, after he hath laid the Foundation, and is not able to finish it; all that beheld it begin to mock him, saying, This Man began to build, and was not able to finish.* BUNYAN'S PLIABLE went back at the first Rub: others may bear a few more, and yet go back: be it sooner or later, it matters not, the Apostate will meet with Contempt in this World, and Condemnation in the next.

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Let us, SYNTYCHE, count the Cost: it is true, we have stood some Brushes, and your ANDRONICUS has stood some that has tried his Strength, and left considerable Scars and Wounds upon him. What then? we have not yet finished our Warfare, and what we have yet to meet with, God only knows. Let us, I say, count the Cost: *Have we sufficient to finish?* If we have nothing but Nature's Strength, our Doing will soon be done; but if we can say, *The LORD JEHOVAH is my Strength*, let us go forward and sing, *He also is become my Salvation.*

- "JESUS, I hang upon the Word.
- "My feeble Soul has heard from thee;
- "Be mindful of thy Promise LORD,
- "Thy Promise made to such as me,
- "To such as Sion's Paths pursue,
- "Who dare believe that God is true."

It is profitable to converse about Others, when we do it in a proper Spirit, and the Use we make of it, is to note, what hindered the Intention of assuming a Profession from becoming effectual; or if assumed, what occasioned *Shipwreck of Faith and of a good Conscience?* Scripture has recorded many Things for our Warning and Example: we may follow its Pattern, and improve the Things

Things that have fallen within our own Knowledge in the same Way.

But the sweetest and most instructive Converse is, when Friends in JESUS freely relate to each other, the Secrets of their Hearts—the Temptations they have met with in the Way—how they were put to it by them—what they suffered—and how they escaped. Believe me, SYNTYCHE, these are Matters, not to be communicated to every wayfaring Man who wears a Pilgrim's Garb: I must know the Man to whom I tell the Secrets of my Heart, and be known of him: much Mischief has been done by experimental Conversation with improper Persons, who have turned to Ridicule, what proper Persons would have improved to Edification. I would talk, SYNTYCHE, of the Doctrines and Commandments of the LORD, with all who are disposed to converse of them; but I will talk of my Experience, and open my Secrets, only to the Friends of my Heart.

I am struck with that sweet Simplicity with which FAITHFUL relates his Experience to CHRISTIAN: but thus it should be done, or not at all; and I cannot help remarking from the Nature of his, that is,

FAITHFUL'S Temptations, that our Author designs to give us the peculiar Trials of Saints called in early Life, while they are subject to all the Propensities of Youth: but let us hear him.

His first Trials were from the LUSTS of the FLESH, than which perhaps Nothing is more ensnaring to the Soul, perplexing to the Conscience, or difficult to overcome. Hence the Exhortation, *Beware of fleshly Lusts which war against the Soul.* They promise much Content and Satisfaction, and apply to Feelings and Inclinations which are almost irresistible; nay, I may say, without Grace entirely so. But how did FAITHFUL escape? It was by Faith: for he remembered and believed the old Writing, which says of the Harlot, *Her Steps take hold of Hell*, so he followed that old Example, *I have made a Covenant with my Eyes: wherefore should I look upon a Maid.*

Not only the Lusts of Uncleanness, but the many Things which promise Delight to the carnal Appetite, press hard upon the youthful Mind. Youth is a Period adapted to relish and enjoy *the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lusts of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life:* that Season of Life is strongly inclined to the Things

Things of the *first Adam*. Ease, Pleasure, Honour, and Profit, have alluring Aspects : riper Ages of Life select their particular Idols ; but Youth grasps at them all. No Wonder FAITHFUL at first found an Inclination to go with the OLD MAN : and when at last he rejected him, felt such a deadly Twitch of his Flesh, that he thought the OLD MAN had pulled Part of him after himself.

To avoid the Imputation of being *Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God* ; to deny Ourselves of worldly Delights, when they would impede our Course to Heaven ; is no easy Matter : it is often like pulling the Flesh from the Bone, or as JESUS has expressed it, *plucking out the right Eye, and cutting off the right Hand* : yet this, if they offend, must be done, *if we would enter into Life*. There is no compromising Matters, *He that is the Friend of the World, is the Enemy of God* : therefore it is said, *Love not the World, nor the Things of the World, for where the Love of the World is, the Love of the Father is not.*

As every Age has its Propensities to particular Things, so every Age of a Believer is liable to Conflicts with the OLD

MAN, about some of his Properties: he who is subdued becomes a Slave, and he who resists, cries, *O wretched Man that I am*, for he sorely feels the Law in his Members warring against the Law of his Mind. Yet unless we *put off the old Man with his Deeds, which are corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts*: we cannot put on the new Man, which after GOD is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.

How often may we say to Professors, *Why art thou, a King's Son, lean from Day to Day?* that emaciated Carcass of Religion which they bear about with them, plainly indicates the Nature of their Disorder: that the Love of some carnal Indulgence eats out the vital Powers of Godliness.

"What enchants you; Pelf, or Pleasure?
 "Pluck right Eyes; with right Hands part:
 Ask your Conscience, where's your Treasure?
 "For be certain there's your Heart.
 "Give the fawning Foe no credit,
 "Lo! the bloody Flag's unfurl'd:
 "That base Heart, the Word has said it,
 "Loves not God, that loves the World."

Temptations to indulge the Flesh, act with peculiar Force, when Difficulties are before us. It is natural to prefer Ease to Pain, and Enjoyment to Self-denial: nor

is the Preference unlawful, when Ease and Enjoyment result from the proper Use of the Bounties of HEAVEN: It is when they are preferred to CHRIST, and to our DUTY; when we turn from the Way of the LORD, to avoid the Cross: then we provoke the Eyes of a jealous God, who says, *My Son, give me thy Heart, and let thine Eyes observe my Ways.* It was at the Foot of the Hill DIFFICULTY that FAITHEUL was accosted by ADAM *the first.*

I have said, my dear Friend, that we provoke the Eyes of a jealous God by our Carnality: the Consequences of his Resentment, is withdrawing his Presence; the Wanderings of the Heart, its secret Inclinations to Sin, draws a Veil over our Evidences, and brings Guilt upon our Consciences. The Commandment comes with its awful Sanctions; *Sin revives and the Sinner dies.* The convincing Power of the Law is dreadful when it smites the Conscience for particular Sins; but when its Spirituality pierces to our Spirits, brings home its Curse to *the Thought of Foolishness as Sin*; it involves us in one great Idea of Misery, which destroys our Hope, at least for a Time, till the LORD appears for our Relief.

Nothing but a fresh Sight of CHRIST, a new View of him by Faith, *as the End of the Law for Righteousness*, can renew our Hope; we fall like FAITHFUL under the repeated Strokes of the accusing and condemning Law, which denies us every Prospect of Mercy, and places Nothing but Condemnation and Death before our Eyes. It is CHRIST alone as the Law's Fulfiller, that becomes our Deliverer from Guilt and Bondage,

“ Guilty and vile before my God,

“ I dread the Vengeance of thy Rod;

“ Thy Justice dreadful Glory claims

“ And bids me sink to endless Flames.

“ JESUS, to thee alone I fly,

“ And wilt thou let a Sinner die?

“ Thy tender Heart will sure forgive,

“ And let a guilty Rebel live.”

Though Conviction of Sin by the Law, is God's first Work upon the Heart, to drive us out of our natural State and Condition, and to cause us to fly to CHRIST for Refuge; it does not then cease: it is necessary we should see and feel deeply the Vileness of our Hearts, and total Depravity of Nature; that we may prize the Gospel more, and become more watchful, humble, and holy. Our first Convictions seldom reach

reach so deep as this : the LORD therefore, in Consequence of Transgression, or Backsliding, brings us under a Second, perhaps repeated Law Works, till fully convinced of what we are by Nature as well as Practice, our Hearts are cured of two Evils ; Legality, and Carelessness. Many of the People of God have found these after Visits of the Law more terrible by far than the first.

I confess, SYNTYCHE, that I am much at a Loss to account for FAITHFUL's passing the House BEAUTIFUL, the Reason puzzles ; "it was about Noon, and much of the Day was before him." This Metaphor seems to indicate, a Meridian Time of Gospel Light and Comfort ; and to me it appears strange, that a Believer so blessed, should neglect the Fellowship and Ordinances of the Gospel. Many, through Fears and Doubts have hung back, and thought they had no Right to those Privileges ; but no Doubts could be upon the Mind of one walking in the Light of God's Countenance. All I can learn from it is, that some of God's Children do not see all their Privileges, nor attend to all their Duties. Mr. BUNYAN neither commends nor blames the Conduct of FAITHFUL : he in-

deed makes CHRISTIAN tell him; "that he would have been no loser," if he had acted otherwise.

But it is Time to close this Letter, which I will do, by commending my dear Friend for early seeking a Place in the House of God, and a Participation of his Ordinances. Continue to fill that Place with Credit to Religion. Be an Example of regular and devout Attendance on all the Means of Grace; and may the God of Ordinances meet and bless you in his own Ways, is the Prayer of thy affectionate

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XIV.

IT was observed in a former Letter, when speaking of the Valley of HUMILIATION, that Paul never appeared more glorious in the Christian Character, than when he said, *I have learned in whatsoever State I am, therewith to be content.* With him it was an established Maxim, that *Godliness with Contentment*

Contentment is great Gain; for says he, We brought Nothing into the World with us, and it is certain we can carry Nothing out, and having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content. A Mind contented with its Lot, is invulnerable to most of the Temptations of the DEVIL, and to *all* the Temptations of the World. A low or humbled Estate, is that in which this Grace is most necessary, because it affords most apparent Reasons for Discontent, and perhaps I shall not err, if I say, that of all the Graces which adorn the Christian Character, there is less to be found of this, than of any other.

To be content when we have all Things, and abound is Nothing very excellent; yet some are so atrociously wicked as to be discontented even then: But to be content in straitness and meanness of Circumstances argues that the Mind is either lost to Sensibility, or is possessed of something which is able to support it. The Former is the Case of many of the Wicked who seem cheerful in apparent Wretchedness; the Latter is sometimes the Case of a Few of the People of God. I say sometimes, because the most Steady are inconstant. I say also a Few, for the greater Part are a murmuring Generation,

Generation. Those Few, to say the least of them, give Proof that they believe the Wisdom, Goodness and Love of God, that they surrender themselves up to his Direction, and are submissive to his Will. These humble Souls are precious in the Sight of the LORD, and it would be almost endless to point out the numerous Passages of his Word, in which he expresses for them, his warmest Approbation.

The Advantages of the Humble and Content, in point of Happiness, are superlative: they escape the Pangs, Anxieties, and Sorrows of the Discontented. A faithful GOD *will keep them in perfect Peace, whose Minds are stayed on him, because they trust in him.* They dare believe that GOD CAN, and WILL give Bread in the Wilderness, and spread a Table for them in the Desert. Bread therefore *shall be given them, and their Water shall be sure, till their Eyes behold the King in his Beauty.*

A State and Frame of Mind which brings so much Glory to God, and Peace to Man, is an Object of SATAN's peculiar Hate. He labours, if possible, to prevent or spoil it. FAITHFUL no sooner enters the Valley of HUMILIATION, than he meets with DIS-
CONTENT,

CONTENT, who would persuade him to go back. Oh, my SYNTYCHE, may the GOD of all Grace enable us to repulse DISCONTENT as FAITHFUL did. We shall, if we can *be content with such Things as we have*: and believe, that *the LORD will never leave nor forsake us*. This is the ARCA^NA of Happinefs, with respect to temporal Things.

DISCONTENT is an Enemy the more dangerous, because it is the less suspected. Many give Way to it, who would start at other Evils; nay, indulge in it, without seeming to consider it sinful: indulge to such Extremes of Fretfulness, as to render all around them miserable. A Christian having committed his All to JESUS, is in Duty bound to rely on his Protection, to acquiesce in his Disposals, and believe that the LORD can, and will choose better for him than he could choose for himself.

“ Why then should we murmur and grieve,

“ Since JESUS is always the same?

“ He promises never to leave

“ The Soul that confides in his Name.

“ To save us from all that we fear,

“ Himself he resign'd to be slain;

“ We trust that he still will appear

“ To cheerish and comfort again.

“ While here in an Enemy's Land,

“ We cannot be always at Peace;

“ If

“ If JESUS our Friend is at Hand,

“ We sure shall have timely Release.

“ Ere long he will bid us remove

“ From Regions of Sorrow and Grief;

“ To rest in his Presence above,

“ And give us eternal Relief.”

We pass on to the Trial of Trials, if I may be allowed such a Form of Expression; that is, the Temptation to be ashamed of JESUS and his Ways.. The Account which FAITHFUL gives us of SHAME, is beautifully just and natural, and the Description he gives of the many Assaults of this SHAME, coincides with the Experience of all who have taken up the Cross of CHRIST, in a greater or less Degree. The Temptation to Shame, is more or less powerful and pressing, according to Time and Circumstances. The Apostles *were made Spectacles to the World, to Angels and Men, and counted as the Filth of the World, and the Offscouring of all Things;* and in Times of great Opposition to Religion, this is the Case with all who walk faithfully and holy. How hard for Men of Sensibility, to stand the Shock of universal Scorn and Contempt without a Blush? A Believer situated in a wicked Family, finds it hard to bear the
 Jeers

Jeers and Scoffs of those that reproach Religion; but the greatest Difficulty of all, is to encounter Ridicule when pointed with Wit and Satyr. SHAME has therefore made more Apostates than any other Temptation whatever. Just is the Observation of FAITHFUL, that we must cry to him for Help, who will have us to be valiant for Truth upon the Earth, for unless his Spirit engraves upon your Hearts, *He that is ashamed of me before Men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his holy Angels; the sinful Blush will suffuse our Countenances, and we shall cowardly conceal our Profession.*

So perfectly has FAITHFUL described the Operations of Shame, and the best Means of repelling its Attacks, that it would be superfluous to say more upon the Subject.

The cursory Manner in which FAITHFUL mentions the Rest of his Journey, until Christian overtook him, only observing that he had Sunshine all the Way, shews that those Trials, though great in themselves, as the Valley of the SHADOW OF DEATH must be; are Lights to Faith, if we are favoured with the special Presence of God, and appear hardly worth mentioning.

When the Churches have Peace, the Path of Profession is wide enough for all
Sorts

Sorts of Professors; because the Form of Godliness exposes them to no Danger. Permit me, SYNTYCHE, to introduce you to the Company and Acquaintance of a Gentleman of very specious Appearance and considerable Abilities. He is a Member of a very numerous Family, all the Individuals of which have a strong family Likeness both in Features and Dispositions.

This numerous Family is disseminated abroad far and wide: scarce a religious Society but has one or more of them in it; and as I make no doubt some of them may dwell in your Neighbourhood, you shall attend to the Discourse between this Man and FAITHFUL, which together with CHRISTIAN'S Character of him, will enable you to form a proper Judgment of his Brethren. When you have attended to these Things, we will make our Remarks.

Well, my dear Friend, you have attended: we will now talk of this Family between Ourselves, considering this Mr TALKATIVE, as the Architype of the whole Race. Begin we with his Description and Character: for as I said, the Similarity runs through the whole Kindred.

TALKATIVE was tall, and more comely at a Distance than near. This is the Case
with

with many Professors, whose religious Appearance is shewy; they appear zealous in attending Public Worship, and frequent other religious Meetings, where their apparent Devotion and Attention, if one searches no further, gives one the Idea of a warm hearted and ornamental Christian.

Gifts of Understanding and Tongue, abound in these Professors: by hearing and reading the Word, and by the Help of a good Memory, they treasure up Knowledge, with which they make a Figure, and pass for Persons of extraordinary Attainments. The Doctrinal Parts of Religion, with the usual Arguments by which they have been supported, is their Fort. They are skilled in all the Terms and Modes of Expression, that have been used by the most famous and popular Preachers and Writers of their Day. Nor do they fail to get a Smattering of the Language of experimental Christians.

With this Furniture, their Tongues are a perpetual Larum in the Company of religious Persons, where they are not only fond of promoting religious Subjects, but nearly engross the whole Conversation to Themselves.

CHRIS-

CHRISTIAN'S ACCOUNT of TALKATIVE is true: fond of Prating they are for any Company, and any Conversation, so they can but set their Tongues a going; but Religion is their Favourite: several Times it has been my Lot, when necessity has obliged me to enter a Public House, to find some one of these Gentry haranguing on religious Subjects to their fellow Sots, who gaped and stared with Astonishment at the Profoundity of their Knowledge.

Follow these Men into private, or commercial Life, and there is not a Vice that can be named, but may be found among them, to the Scandal and Disgrace of the Religion they profess.

In Country Places, where private Characters are more visible, than in populous Towns, the TALKATIVES are more easily known, and good Men are ashamed of them, disown them, and avoid their Company: but in this Metropolis, there are Numbers, whose sounding Tongues, and tinkling Phrases, enable them to impose on the Godly, and thereby pass for Years as the most eminent of Saints, while the World knows them to be Devils.

Truly religious Persons, as they are honest themselves, think every Body else
who

who appear to be religious, must be so too; till being repeatedly deceived they become less Credulous. Many are so weak as to suppose that were there is a great deal of Talk, there must be a great deal of Grace: not considering that *Things without Life may give a great Sound*, and that an Apostle has told us, that some great and fine Talkers whose Tongues seem to be more than human, are no better than *sounding Bells, and tinkling Cymbals*.

I have often wondered at the Success of these Men in imposing on some good People, who in other Respects were very judicious and discerning: I would not be thought to arrogate to myself a Power of Judgment superior to every one else; nor lay Claim to the Gift of *discerning Spirits*; but the obtrusive Prate of these forward Talkers, affects me as a Highwayman's Pistol would do: I am apprehensive of being robbed. They seem to demand one's Esteem and Veneration for their great Talents, Grace, and Knowledge: beside, there is a certain Emptiness, and want of Savour, attends their Volubility, by which I think they might be felt and known. Human Hearts are created respondant to each other: there

there are certain Sympathies in our Nature, by means of which, that which comes from the Heart, reaches to the Heart. I mean if the Hearts be in unison. I have often therefore wondered, that the forward Prate of one whose Heart is empty of Religion, should give Pleasure and Satisfaction to one who has *tasted that the LORD is gracious.*

I am aware, SYNTYCHE, that you may possibly tell me, that were my Notions to prevail, they would open the Door to evil Surmisings; and the Freedom of Christian Fellowship would be destroyed: Nay, it would be a Blow at the Root of Christian Love, by poisoning the Heart with Suspicions and Jealousies of one another's Hypocrisy. I reply, my Friend, if Consequences like these should follow, the Guilt and Blame be upon those in whom they take Place: but let me transfer the Matter to myself.

Was my Mind to imbibe Suspicions of any Person being a mere Talker, from the Causes I have mentioned; and that Person was likely to be my Companion in Profession, I should think it my Duty not to rest in a State of Suspence, but by Watchfulness over him,

him, and suitable Enquiry after him, I would acquaint myself with his real Character. If upon Enquiry I found his Life was ornamental and holy, I would ascribe my Suspicions to some temporary Derangement in *my* Spirit, which prevented my favouring his Conversation: I would banish Suspicion from my Heart, and confirm my Love towards him: and far from regretting that I had suffered Suspicions to arise, I should rejoice that I had searched, and found my Companion to be sterling.

Tell me, SYNTYCHE, would the suspected Person be injured by my Suspicions? would he suffer any Loss in Point of Christian Fellowship? or be deprived of any Portion of Christian Love? just the Reverse: he would be a Gainer in all these Respects, and I, delivered from Suspicions, the Rising of which I could not prevent; should feel my Mind at Liberty to converse with him on the Footing of a Brother in CHRIST.

Now let us reverse the Case, and suppose that, by Watchfulness over him, and suitable Enquiry concerning him, I found his Life at Variance with his Tongue, and a Scandal to Religion; I should in this Case also have Reason to rejoice that I had so far

far indulged my Suspicions as to proceed to Proof ; that Proof obtained, new Duties arise, as appears by CHRISTIAN'S Conduct towards FAITHFUL, and the Latter's Conduct towards TALKATIVE.

To relate our Suspicions of any one, to Others, before we have proved the Truth, or Falsehood of them ; is no better than Whispering and Backbiting. This Conduct, I confess, *would* be opening the Door to *evil surmising*, it *would* destroy the Freedom of Christian Fellowship, and be a Blow at the Root of brotherly Love: let us beware of it, as a Source of Mischief, arising either from Weakness or Wickedness: let us check and reprove it, both in Ourselves and Others. CHRISTIAN acted otherwise, "I have observed him," said he, "both at home and abroad, and I know what I say of him is Truth." From this Principle he warned FAITHFUL, "This Fellow will beguile with this Tongue of his, twenty of them who know him not." But should we suffer our Brethren to be beguiled by these vain Talkers, and ungodly Livers, the Credit of Religion would suffer; for the World, who know them, will say of those who ignorantly associate with them, because they

they know them not ; “ Aye, aye, they are all alike : ” for these Reasons we should shun them Ourselves, and warn Others to do so too : we should be ashamed of *them*, in order to make them ashamed of Themselves.

These Talkers deceive Themselves as well as Others, for they suppose that Hearing and Saying, will make a good Christian—that holding orthodox Sentiments, and talking of them, constitutes Religion. How excellently CHRISTIAN reasons on the Subject : “ Let us assure Ourselves,” says he, “ that at the Day of Doom, Men shall be judged according to their Fruit : it will not be said then, *Did you believe?* but were you *Doers or Talkers* only ? ” Did Professors keep this Truth more in View, they would not only be less fond of fine tongued Men, with coarse Lives, but less censorious of real good Men, who differ from them in mere Opinions. But to return ;

Before we reject them, it is our Duty to deal faithfully and roundly with them : I mean if they obtrude Themselves upon us : otherwise, I do not know that we are to trouble either Ourselves or them : we should do this for two Reasons ; that we may be

clear

clear of their Blood, and that they may not be able to say with Truth, that we reject them without Trial.

What an excellent Pattern of Soul-searching and edifying Discourse have we in FAITHFUL's Manner of dealing with TALKATIVE: these Men cannot bear to be brought to Appeals to God and Conscience, about their Experience and Practice: by such Discourse therefore, we may soon deliver Ourselves from their Company and Conversation—their Pride is hurt by such Discourse, and their Jealousy awakened, that their real Characters are known; and finding that their Tongues have not attracted Esteem and Admiration, nor are likely to do so, they will leave you for the Company of those with whom they stand a better Chance.

May GOD our SAVIOUR, deeply impress his own divine Words upon our Hearts: *If ye know these Things, happy are ye if ye do them.* Let this lead us to close and faithful Investigation of our own Walk and Conversation, and see to it that our Tempers and our Actions are agreeable to the Gospel: to have a Capacity to talk on religious Subjects is a valuable Gift; if our Practice

Practice agree with our Discourse ; but it is better to excel in real genuine Piety, than to have the most splendid Gifts of the Tongue.

That God may enable SYNTYCHE always to talk and live like a Christian, is the Prayer of his affectionate

ANDRONICUS.

L E T T E R X V .

IT is worthy of Remark, my dear Friend, that though our Pilgrims are past the Vallies of HUMILIATION and the SHADOW OF DEATH ; the Last of which is expressly called a Wilderness ; yet our Author describes them now as going through a Wilderness : to remind us, no doubt, that the best Situations in this World, are to a Heart whose Treasure is in Heaven, but a Wilderness, when compared with the Canaan to which it is going: it produces not the Bread for which the Believer hungers ; for that, like the Manna of old, is given him from Heaven : it yields not the Water for which he thirsts ; for that he receives from

H

JESUS

JESUS, the Rock, whose Streams followed
 the Church through the Deserts of Sinai:
 it has no Cities that can give him a com-
 fortable Residence; GOD has therefore
 prepared for him a City, which City he
 seeks, and confesses himself to be a Stran-
 ger, and not of this World: a Pilgrim, who
 is travelling through it.

- “ Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth,
- “ Behold thy lowly Followers, LORD :
- “ Call'd to the Way by second Birth,
- “ We yield Obedience to thy Word.
- “ Thy Hand sustains the Poor with Bread,
- “ The Fainting cheers with Canaan's Wine,
- “ The Meek thou wilt in Judgment lead,
- “ The Feeble blest with Love divine.
- “ Hosanna to the Pilgrims LORD ;
- “ He'll guard us to his Rest above :
- “ He is our Shield and great Reward :
- “ Hosanna to the GOD of Love.

Agreeable Conversation on a Journey,
 beguiles the Time, makes the Way seem
 shorter, and prevents Weariness. Such a
 Relief to the weary Mind, is Christian
 Conversation, particularly the narrative
 Kind of Conversation; for Narrative is al-
 ways entertaining. To relate our past Joys
 and Sorrows, our Doubts and Fears, with
 their Solutions; our Dangers and Escapes;
 our

our Temptations and Victories; our Afflictions and Deliverances; is both pleasing and instructive. Prudence however should be used, with Regard to this Kind of Conversation; not to hold it in the Presence of those whose Hearts are Strangers to the Exercises of Christians.

It is true, we ought not to be ashamed of what God has done for us: neither ought we to be proud of it: yet to talk of it in the Presence of any Body, or every Body, seems to indicate a proud Wish to be thought the peculiar Favourites of Heaven. To make the best of it, it is giving that which is holy to Dogs, or casting Pearls before Swine, who will trample them under Foot, and turn and rend you. Never be afraid, nor ashamed, SYNTYCHE, to plead the Cause of God and Holiness, in the Face of Men or Devils: but never dream of feeding Hogs with Pearls; or what is as absurd, of doing good to carnal Persons by relating your Experiences before them. Reserve these, for those who can understand you, and who are capable of being instructed or encouraged by them.

The Interview and Discourse betwixt
EVANGELIST and the Pilgrims, beautifully
H 2 describes

describes the twofold Use Believers should make of the Gospel; that of Retrospection, and that of Prospect: but mark, my SYNTYCHE, the Salutations that commence the Interview: Peace, on the Part of the Gospel; and Affection on the Part of the Pilgrims.

When a carnal Man looks into the Gospel, or hears it read or preached; though Peace is the the Subject of it, he feels not the Blessing at his Heart: and why? because his Heart sees not, nor feels its Wretchedness, it therefore comes not home to him: He does not consider any Thing it says, as applicable to, or spoken to him, but some one else: he reads or hears it, as a Man, who conceiving himself in Health, would read or hear a medical Prescription: it is a Matter in which he has no Interest or Concern. *The Whole*, says JESUS, *need not the Physician, but those that are sick.* He cannot love the Gospel, "he cannot say, Welcome, welcome, my good EVANGELIST." At best he can but treat it with Indifference; but if its Light should happen to be troublesome, as is the Case when that Light shines in the Lives of Believers, he is worse than indifferent: his Heart rises
in

in Rage and Malice against it, as we shall see by and by, when we arrive at VANITY FAIR.

Not so, the Soul who is quickened from the *Death in Trespasses and Sins*: alive to the Subjects the Gospel treats of, as his only Hope; he hears or reads them as addressed to himself: the Blessings of the Gospel suit his Wants, and meet his Wishes: he feels the Peace it pronounces sooth his anxious Heart to rest, and sees the Duties it enjoins, productive of, and congenial with his Happiness: he loves the Gospel with warm Affection, and can say with FAITHFUL, "A thousand times welcome, thy Company, oh sweet EVANGELIST: how desirable is it to us poor Pilgrims!"

Desirable indeed! it is our best Friend and Comforter, while we pass through this Wilderness. It is our Wisdom to prize the Gospel; to converse much with it, and frequent its Ordinances and Ministrations with devout Affections.

" May we receive the Word we hear,

" Each in an honest Heart;

" Hoard up the precious Treasure there,

" And never with it part."

I said there was a twofold Use which Believers should make of the Gospel: the

first of which is Retrospection, or looking back upon our past Way. This is implied in the Question of EVANGELIST, "How it fared with the Pilgrims? What they had met with? and how they had behaved Themselves?" If we read or hear the Gospel with Understanding, these important Questions will come home to our Hearts. Whether we have seen, felt, and known, the Blessing of which the Gospel speaks? What we have met with of the Trials, Temptations, and Afflictions of which the Gospel speaks, and how we have behaved Ourselves in them? The Former of these we must attend to, for the Sake of the Latter. The Number and Measure of our Trials, is comparatively of small Consequence: they are for both, what our heavenly Father pleases. The important Thing is, how we have behaved in them: for this Reason we must review them in the Light of the Gospel; and see if we have acted faithfully—resisted manfully—and suffered patiently.

As far as we have thus done, the Gospel will approve us, *our own Hearts will not condemn us, and we shall have Confidence before GOD, for hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our Hearts before him.*

The

The Conviction of our Failures and Imperfections, will awaken to Repentance, Caution, and Fear: we shall hear the Gospel with Effect say, *So run that ye may obtain—let no Man take your Crown—in due Time ye shall reap, if ye faint not.* We shall have, together with a grateful Sense of our Obligations to divine Grace, this important Lesson brought home to our Hearts; *I have not yet attained, neither am I already perfect.* It is for want of this kind of Retrospection, or Examination, that Professors grow indolent in their Pursuits of Holiness, and seem to sit down as though they had attained all that is necessary. This Indolence is, however, ominous of Danger, for, if we do not go forward, we Backslide: there is no standing still in the Ways of God.

We must use the Gospel as a Prospective, to look into Futurity; or rather hearken to it as a Prophet foretelling future Events. This Prophet will tell us, *That through much Tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God.* That Tribulations of every sort and kind, even to Bonds and Martyrdom are in our Way: and that we ought not to expect to go long on our Pilgrimage, without them in some sort or

other. That we must *fight the good fight of Faith*, if we would *lay hold on eternal Life*.

No Peace or Rest, but that which flows from GOD and a good Conscience, does the Gospel promise us ; but on the Contrary says ; *Fear none of those Things which thou shalt suffer : behold the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have Persecution ten Days : be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*. For want of Attention to the Declarations of the Gospel, many have begun well, and seemed to run fast towards Heaven, till Tribulation stopped their Speed, perhaps turned them back. *When fiery Trials came to try their Faith*, they thought it a strange and unexpected Event. Alas ! had they heard and attended to the Gospel, they would have heard it say, *Think it not strange concerning the fiery Trial which is to try you, as though some strange Thing happened to you : but rejoice in as much as you are Partakers of CHRIST's Sufferings, that when his Glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding Joy*.

Let us, SYNTYCHE, bless our GOD, when he gives us Rest from Trouble : Let us enjoy with Temperance and rejoice with Sobriety in the Day of Peace and Prosperity :
but

but let us remember the evil Days are not all past : let us look out for Trouble ; not with slavish distressing Fear ; but with holy Precaution, that we may be prepared for it : and may it be our principal Concern that *When we are tried, we may come forth as Gold.*

Our Author makes EVANGELIST dwell almost altogether upon the Tribulations and Persecutions which arise on Account of the Word : because he is going to present us with a Scene of this kind : to exhibit his Pilgrims in Bonds and Martyrdom. In my next Letter we will attend him, to behold the Patience of the Saints, and the Rage and Malice of the Enemies of the dear LORD JESUS. May his Grace be with you and your

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XVI.

I AM greatly rejoiced, my dear Friend, at the Account your Last brought me, concerning ARCHIPPUS, that he *takes Heed to the Ministry he has received in the LORD* to

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fulfil

fulfil it, doing the Work of an Evangelist, and labouring to make full Proof of his Ministry.

What a Blessing to your Society, to have a Minister, who is not only plain, practical, and powerful in his public Labours, but affectionate and faithful in his friendly Visits, manifesting that the Soul Concerns of those he visits, are more upon his Mind, than their good Chear. ARCHIPPUS, you say, is like BUNYAN'S EVANGELIST, his Visits are received with Affection by his Flock, and that he always enquires, "How they have fared since he last saw them? what they have met with? and how they have behaved?" this is indeed to be the Minister of the Gospel.

You complain that his precious Visits are not more frequent: but you have no Reason to complain, if they are so profitable—Were they more frequent, they might be less profitable: for such is the Corruption of human Nature, that we surfeit most by the best Things. He is wise and judicious in his Conduct: it is better to visit seldom and profitably, than to run from House to House, with "How do ye do's?" and depart without profitable and savory Conversation.

But

But he visits some few Persons, more frequently than he does the Rest of his Flock: be it so; why should this excite your Jealousy? are the Ministers of CHRIST, alone to be denied the Privilege of particular Friendship? I trow not: I have indeed, heard it said, that Ministers have no Right to particular Friendships; but ought impartially to divide their Affections and their Visits, amongst their People. This I believe to be impossible in the Nature of Things: and besides, I suspect the Remark to arise more from Pride than Piety. But let us attend to our Pilgrims.

The comparing of this busy World, with its eager Pursuits, to a Town in Fair Time, is a beautiful and instructive Similitude: it will be well worth our while to attend to the several Parts of it.

It is the Prospect of Gain and Advantage, which draws a Number of Persons and Families together, the Contiguity of whose Dwellings constitute a Town. This Vicinity is formed for the Convenience of Merchandize and Manufactories. The Motive which attaches the Inhabitants to the Place, is Interest; the Bond and Cement of Union among them, is Interest. When their As-

semblies or Affociations convene, they talk much of the Public Good: of the general Benefit: of the Welfare of the Whole: but every Man's Heart, is all the while meditating his own Interest. He talks of the Public, and of the Whole; but he thinks only of One; and that One is Himself. Self Interest is his single Eye, with which he views every Object: self Interest is the Polestar by which he steers his Course: self Interest forms his Friendships and Connection: self Interest is the *Primum Mobile* of all his Actions.

And this, SYNTYCHE, is the Case with the whole World: it is a large and populous Town, whose numerous Inhabitants are connected, as self Interest dictates. When their Interests happen to coincide, they are Friends, Brothers, and kind Acquaintance: When their Interests jar, they are Enemies. From the Monarchs who rule, down through all the Departments of Life, to the Cottager who labours; all are actuated by the same Motive; each moves in his Sphere, in the same Manner: *For as Face answereth to Face in the Water, so doth the Heart of Man to Man.* Mens Interests have different Modifications, which arise from

from Difference of Inclination, Taste, Education, or Prejudice. These Modifications take their Forms and Names from the three Aggregates of all that is in the World, *The Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*: and are denominatèd, Fame, Honor, Glory, Love, Wealth, and what not; but the Life and Soul of all these is one and the same Thing, self Interest, or Gratification.

These Things we are told, *Are not of the Father, but of the World: love not the World, nor the Things that are in the World; for if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him. True Religion, and undefiled before GOD even the FATHER, is to visit the Fatherless and the Widow in their Affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the World. To look, not entirely on ones own Things, but on the Things of others. To weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice: to bear one anothers Burdens, and so fulfil the Law of CHRIST.*

The World, and the Things of it, are Nature; but Nature depraved and ruined: these Things are Nature also, but Nature renewed from above. *The old Man which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts, is put off.*

off, and the new Man, which after GOD, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, is put on; and we know that we are of GOD, and the whole World lieth in Wickedness. Though Believers are not of the World, yet while they are in it, they have constant Need to watch and pray, lest the old Leaven ferment again, lest their former Principles revive in their Hearts. For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and these are contrary, the one to the other, which prevents us from doing the Things which we would. But more of this hereafter.

The World is called the Town of VANITY, because the Dispositions of all the Children of the World are *lighter than Vanity*: and because all the Business and Cares which occupy their Minds, are Vanity: the Eagerness and Diligence of their Pursuits, constitute, the Idea of the Bustle of a Fair, and the Constancy of those Pursuits, that of "a Fair kept all the Year."

If you look over the List of the Commodities of this Fair, you will find that some of them are in Themselves lawful, if lawfully pursued and used; nevertheless they are Vanity when compared with heavenly Things, and must, if called for, be sacrificed, and forsaken

faken, for the celestial Crown. *He that loveth these more than me, says JESUS, is not worthy of me.* Hear also an Apostle. *But this I say, Brethren, the Time is short: it remaineth that they that have Wives, be as though they had none—they that weep, as though they wept not—they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not—they that buy, as though they possessed not—and they that use this World as not abusing it, for the Fashion of this World passeth away.* If the lawful Things of the World are Vanity, what are the unlawful? they are not only *Vanity*, but *Vexation of Spirit*.

Alas! SYNTYCHE, if Vanity was all that could be said of this World, its Case would indeed be bad, and the Children of God have important Reasons to separate themselves from it. But the Wickedness, Knavery, and Cruelty, daily practised in it, is shocking beyond Expression. I do not wonder that Men unacquainted with the Word of God, should doubt of God's providential Government of the World: even Asaph, while he looked upon the Course of this World, doubted for a while: and many of God's Children, since his Day, have found their Faith greatly shaken, till, like him, they saw in the Sanctuary of God the End of these Things.

Why

Why God should suffer Things to go on thus, is too deep and mysterious a Matter for our Penetration. *We walk by Faith, not by Sight*, let us leave off our vain Enquiries about the Reasons of the divine Conduct: he gives Account of his Matter to none, *secret Things belong to the LORD our GOD, and Things that are revealed, to us, and to our Children.* He has told us, that GOD has appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness. Then "Knaves and Rogues of every kind, Thieves, Murderers, Adulterers, and false Swearers," will meet with deserved Vengeance: 'till then, Prudence and Prayer, are, I believe, our best Defence against them: the LORD help us to make proper Use of them!

The Entrance of Sin into the World was the Origin of this FAIR. The conducting and Government of the World as a Fair, has ever since been managed by SATAN, who is called *the God of this World and the Ruler of its Darkness.* Infinite Wisdom, for the best Purposes, no doubt, has ordained that his Children should pass through this horrid Scene of Vanity, Confusion, and Wickedness. I chide my Heart for murmuring, which bleeds even while I write,
from

from Wounds received in this Place, where SATAN'S Seat is. Peace to every repining Thought ! the Prince of Life himself passed through it. Oh, that like him, I may treat its Vanities with deserved Contempt, and suffer its Indignities with becoming Patience !

There is such a Contrast betwixt the faithful Disciples of the LORD, and the Men of this World ; that they appear, as they really are, Strangers, and of different Countries. In Places where the Gospel has been a while established, and the Novelty of it, and its Effects, a little worn off, the Wonder of the Men of the World has ceased ; and without a Grain more of Love to CHRIST or his People, they return to their own Affairs, and let the Disciples alone : but whenever, and wherever, the Gospel has made its first Appearance, or there has been a Revival of it in Spirit and Power, after a long Time of Lukewarmness and Formality, the Consequences have always been similar to those described by our Author, concerning his Pilgrims at VANITY-FAIR. You and I, my dear Friend, can recollect many Scenes of the kind which have happened within our own Memories :
 what

what Consternation and Uproar, Mobbing and Persecutions, have taken Place in many Parts of this Kingdom, even where Magistrates have endeavoured to keep the Peace: nor have I the Shadow of a Doubt that the Effect will be the same, wherever new Efforts to revive Religion shall be made: and if in a Time when we are protected by the Civil Power, Matters are thus, what must they have been, when the Sword of the Magistrate seconded the Fury of the Mob, and punished the Servants of the LORD, as the Cause of those Disturbances by which they were Sufferers?

But whence these violent Commotions, and what is their Cause? It is the Contrast between the Characters of the One and the Other. *If ye were of the World, says the LORD JESUS, the World would love its own: but because ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you. If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, what will they not call those of his Household?*

Three Things made the Pilgrims appear like outlandish Men; their Dress, Speech, and Manners. In three Things do the

the People of GOD differ from the Men of the World: in their *Profession*, *Conversion*, and *Pursuits*, of these, we will speak in another Letter. *Though the Heathen should rage, and the People imagine a vain Thing against the LORD and against his Anointed; may he who sitteth in the Heavens, and who has set his King upon his holy Hill of Sion, cause his Kingdom to come in all the Earth.* SYNTYCHE, I know, will say Amen, to this Prayer of his

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XVII.

JOSHUA the High Priest, and his Fellows, were *Men wondered at*: but what was it that created this Wonder? It was a remarkable Change which the LORD had caused to take Place in their Circumstances; for I consider the Fellows of Joshua to be Wonders, upon the same Account as himself. *Their filthy Garments were taken from them, and they were clothed with change of Raiment.*

The

The Clothes or Garments of a Man, constitute his external Appearance: the Quality of them is considered as indicating his Condition in Life, and the Fashion of them, the Country he belongs to. So the Deportment and Manners of a Christian, which are the Garb of his Profession; indicate him to be a Character different from the Men of the World. Grace, which changes the Heart, models the Life, and gives it other Manners, which create the Wonder, and provoke the Enmity of the Children of Disobedience. Hear the Apostle Peter: *For the Time past of our Life may suffice us, to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles, when we walked in Lasciviousness, Lusts, excess of Wine, Revilings, Banquetings, and abominable Idolatries. Wherein they think it strange, that you run not with them to the same Excess of Riot: SPEAKING EVIL OF YOU.*

Such a Change as is here described, brings the Subject of it under the Imputation of Folly, Madness, and needless Preciseness, and makes them a *Gazing-stock to the World.*

Speech or Conversation is another Distinction of a Saint: he will not be always talking

talking of Religion, but will prudently regard both Time and Place; yet when he does, how differently does he do it, both as to Manner and Matter: how very different from the Children of this World. The unaffected Seriousness and Earnestness of his Manner, betokens a Conversation flowing from the Heart, and that the Things spoken of, are believed and felt: how unlike the cold, insipid, indifferent, and awkwardly constrained Manner of carnal Men, who can neither believe, nor feel the Power of serious Things.

The Matter of a Christian's Conversation is unintelligible to carnal Men: to complain of *a Body of Sin and Death: a Law in the Members warring against a Law in the Mind: to cry, O wretched Man that I am: and yet to add, I am crucified with CHRIST, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me: and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of GOD, who loved me, and gave himself for me;* to talk thus appears so incoherent and absurd, that it fully establishes the Idea of Insanity in the Speaker.

Equally unintelligible does the Christian seem when he talks of the *Entrance*
of

of Sin and of Death by Sin—of Judgment passing upon all to Condemnation—of the Wrath of GOD—of the Curse of the Law—of Redemption in the Blood of CHRIST, even the Forgiveness of Sin—of the Power of CHRIST's Resurrection—of his dwelling in the Heart—of his pleading in Heaven—all Subjects so different from

“What smooth Emollients in Theology,

“Recumbent Virtues downy Doctors preach:”

that Men of the World, like the Athenians of old, cry out, “Thou bringest certain strange Things to our Ears; we would know of thee, what this new Doctrine is, of which thou speakest.”

In the common Intercourse of Life, a Believer's Speech is seasoned with Grace as with Salt: not tainted with Filthiness, foolish Talking, and inconvenient Jestings; but modest, sober, chaste and inoffensive. How opposite to the Blasphemy, Obscenity, Rhodomantade, and empty trifling Discourse, of the Bulk of Men. No wonder Persons so different in Speech should be as Barbarians to each other. A Gallilean's Speech will always betray him.

We come now to the third Point of Difference, namely, the Object of their Pursuits.

suits. The Men of this World are thus described by a faithful Pen. *Their God is their Belly—their Glory is their Shame—they mind earthly Things.* Earth with its Enjoyments, Comforts, and Conveniences, is all they seek : they strain every Nerve, and use every Means unlawful, as well as lawful, to obtain it. They have neither Time nor Disposition for a serious Thought about Eternity ; but pursue with the Celerity of a Bird on the Wing, the Object of their Heart's Desire.

AVARO rises early, sits up late, and eats the Bread of Carefulness : his Feet trudge to every Mart where Profit is likely to accrue : his Ears, like those of the attentive Hare, catch every Sound ; and not a Breath whispers in the commercial World, but AVARO knows the Import of it : he estimates the Wealth of either Indias, to make them Resources to encrease his own : he finds out the State of the Markets for every Commodity through the habitual World, and governs the home Markets by his Knowledge : he affects the national Funds, as the Temperature of the Air does the Barometer ; and they rise and fall by his Influence. Ever in Motion, he pervades the whole System of Commerce, with a
Circu-

Circulation, like that of the Blood, flowing through the arterial and venial System of the human Body.

The Day of sacred Rest, as it interrupts his bodily Activity, is spent in poring over his Books, and adjusting them: domestic Oeconomy regulates every Expence of the Family, and Parsimony prevents all waste of Money at public Places: his Alms, are few in Number, and sparing in Quantity; distributed, only to ward off the Imputation of being uncharitable.

What does AVARO propose to himself, as the Result of all this? To retire by and by, with Something snugg: to spend the Decline of Life in a little Country Box, and enjoy the Fruits of his Labour in Peace and Tranquillity. Farther than this AVARO has not made the least Provision; and is a total Stranger to the Words of JESUS, *What is a Man profited, if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?*

HORTENTIUS despises the Drudgery of Trade: he affects Wealth, but it is for the Sake of Splendor: he bows with the meanest Obsequiousness to the Dregs of the People, while his Heart despises them. By this Means he makes his Way to the Senate

nate, obtrudes into the Cabinet, involves Nations in Calamities, and trafficks with the Blood of Thousands, for a paltry Ribbon, a sounding Title, and a large Estate. HORTENTIUS never thinks of *durable Riches and Righteousness*, nor of *a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*.

MARTIUS carries Sword and Fire into neighbouring Nations, and involves Cities and Provinces in Ruin; while NAUTICUS traverses the Deep with imitative Thunder to hurl Destruction on the watery Element: both seek the same Objects Wealth, with the Honour that comes from Men. To subdue themselves: *to take the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence*, is no Part of their Plan.

PHILOLOGUS trims the Lamp of Study, and dooms himself to painful sedentary Hours? that he may shine in the Pulpit, or at the Bar, and climb from thence to the Bench, robed in Lawn, or Scarlet and Ermine: PHILOLOGUS forgets the *chief Shepherd and Bishop of Souls*; the *awful Judge of quick and dead*.

PHIDIAS shapes the Marble, and APELLES stains the Canvas: each give their Productions, every Perfection but Animation: the Fame of each descends with their Works through Centuries of Years. Well have they

they imitated Nature, but how have they imitated JESUS CHRIST, and copied his Image?

To order, cries my SYNTYCHE; Did these Ideas ever enter the Head of JOHN BUNYAN? I know not that they did: but I know that were he living, and I was to appeal to him, he would acknowledge the Gentry I have named to be eminent and capital Traffickers in this Fair, and to be the principal Merchants thereof. I shall therefore beg Leave to proceed a little farther before I draw the Balance between the People of VANITY-FAIR and the Children of Light.

ASMODEUS burning with Lust, is fired with Desire at the Sight of Beauty, and pants for Enjoyment: if Enjoyment is purchasable with Money, he sticks not at Price, but is profusely generous in the Rewards of his Gratifications. If Virtue and Innocence guard the desirable Object, no Art or Cunning, no Dissimulation and Hypocrisy, no Expence in the Employment of Pimps and Emissaries is spared to effect the Purposes of Seduction, and draw the destined Victim to his Net: when satiated, he leaves to Infamy and Want, the unhappy Object of his irregular Desires, unfeel-

unfeeling to the Miseries in which he has involved her, and seeks his Happiness in another.

VARANES, less difficult and distinguishing in the Objects of his Desires, but equally the Slave of them, as ASMODEUS; contents himself with indulging in the common Stews, and cools his Fires with the Dregs of Prostitution. Both ASMODEUS and VARANES, prefer the Gratification of Propensities they have in common with Brutes, to that Faith, Charity, and Peace, which is pursued by those that call upon the LORD out of a pure Heart.

VOLPONE concentrates in his Heart all the Vices that are comprehended under the Denominations of Idleness, Wantonness, and Dissipation: luxurious in his Appetites, vain in his Dress, and expensive in his Pleasures and Amusements, without Resources from the Gifts of Providence to gratify his Desires, he has Recourse to Subterfuge and Villany: the Unwary are marked out for his Prey, and the Cunning of the Gambler, or the Artifice of the Swindler, are employed to plunder them. If honest and moderate Things could satisfy VOLPONE, a Genius much less extensive,

tensive, and Parts much less brilliant would suffice to obtain them; but his Heart is insatiable as the Grave: all that VANITY FAIR contains, is insufficient to satisfy it: like the Horseleech, he continually cries, *Give, give*: and like a Sieve, which receives Liquids, is ever empty through his Dissipation.

Even my Patience is now tired, SYNTYCHE: I proceed no farther in describing that motley Herd, the Children of Disobedience, in whose Hearts Satan reigns; whose Lives are spent in *Rioting and Drunkenness, in Chambering and Wantonness, in Strife and Envy, and in making Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof*. Let us turn to a People of other Manners, and of another Language.

This People are one, and they dwell alone: They differ from all other in Profession, Conversation, and Pursuits. The Deportment and Manners of a Christian, we have observed, constitute his external Appearance; and indicate him a Character different from the Men of this World. *Grace, teaches him to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World; abstaining from all Appear-*

pearance

pearance of Evil: and letting his Light shine before Men, that they may see his good Works, and glorify his Father who is in Heaven: modest in his Carriage; meek and inoffensive in his Behaviour; merciful and kind even to his Enemies, and attentive to all the relative Duties of his Station, both in natural and civil Life: rendering to all their Dues, to the Utmost of his Power; injuring no Man, defrauding no Man; but walking in Benevolence and Truth towards all Mankind.

His Associates are the Saints, the Excellent of the Earth, who are his Delight: their Assemblies the Places of his Resort, and the Sabbaths and Ordinances of his God, are his Glory.

Temperate and sober in the Enjoyment of providential good Things, and patient and submissive under Afflictions and Trials; the Man of God, confesses by his Conduct, that *He is a Stranger and Pilgrim upon Earth, and seeks another Country, a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.*

Of Speech or Conversation, we have already treated, both as to Matter and Manner, and shall only add here, that Hypocrits may, and when it suits their Purpose,

often do, assume the Dress or Garb of the Saints. Outward Deportment is sometimes not very Difficult to imitate, and some Men are naturally excellent Mimicks. Different Languages too, may be learned; but there is generally something in Idiom and Accent, which shews it is not the Speaker's vernacular Tongue. Some, however, do tolerably well counterfeit the Language of Canaan, but the Objects pursued by the People of God, mark a decided Difference betwixt them and Hypocrites.

Their Traffic is carried on with Heaven, from whence they look for the LORD JESUS CHRIST; while diligent in Business, as the Means of producing the Fruits of Righteousness, they are fervent in Spirit, serving the LORD. As their Treasure is in Heaven, their Hearts are there also. They traffic to increase that Treasure: they draw upon the Saviour's Bank by Faith and Prayer for Remittances of Grace, Wisdom, and Strength, to be expended here, in order to lay up Treasure above: to lay a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life. They labour with the Diligence of AVARO, not indeed

for

for the Meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth to Life everlasting.

With a higher Ambition than that of HORTENTIUS, the Believer seeks a nobler Title, and a larger Estate. To be called a Son of GOD; to inherit durable Riches and Righteousness, with a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away, is the Object of his Pursuit. To obtain these, he bows low, not with mean Servility to Men, but at the Throne of Grace, that he may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help him in Time of Need: Born from above, he seeks the Honors which come from GOD, and the Happiness which flows from his Presence. To be with JESUS—to inherit all Things—to sit upon a Throne—to associate with Angels—to shine as a Star in the Firmament for ever, are the worthy Aims of the Heaven-born Soul.

The Believer is passing through an Enemies Country, and meets with Oppositions which try his Strength: the World, the Flesh, and the Devil combine to obstruct his Passage, and destroy him: he has no Alternative, but must conquer or die. He looks up to the Captain of his Salvation for Protection and Assistance; and

emulous of the Conqueror's Mead, he put on the whole Armour of GOD. *To subdue Sin—to work Righteousness—to overcome the World—to resist the Devil and make him flee;* are Triumphs to which the Atchievements of MARTICUS and NAUTICUS are Trifles, and their Reward as trifling; Heaven waits to reward the Christian with everlasting Fame.

“ There shall he wear a starry Crown,

“ And triumph in Almighty Grace :

“ While all the Armies of the Skies,

“ Join in his glorious Leader's Praise.”

The Christian is studious also: he pursues a Track of Learning, high and out of Sight to PHILOGUS: that which antient Sages thought the Height of Science, namely, “ Man know thyself,” is with the Believer the Beginning of it. The Knowledge of what he is by Nature; poor, miserable, guilty, ruined and helpless; lays the Foundation of all his Acquisitions in the *Knowledge of the Love of GOD—the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST—the Merits of his Blood and Righteousness—and the Power of his sanctifying Spirit.* These glorious Subjects, lay before him his true Interest and Happiness—afford him *Peace and Joy in believing*—and inspire him with Fortitude and Courage to do and suffer the Will of GOD;

GOD; arm him with Patience and Perseverance under the Trials and Temptations of Life; and by *Reproof, Correction, and Instruction*, make him a *Man of God*, *thoroughly furnished to every good Work*. Under the Tuition of the greatest and best of Masters, He *in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*; he grows in Grace, and in the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS his LORD. Studiously pursuing the Lore of heavenly Learning, his Mind glances back to ancient Purposes of everlasting Love, and looks forward to everlasting Ages of Glory and Happiness.

The Records of the Events of intervening Time;—Events which arise from God's everlasting Love, and lead to the everlasting Happiness of his People; afford the Believer Topics for Study and Meditation, which sublimates his Mind above the Love of earthly Things: Providence as well as Grace, affords him Views of the Love, Faithfulness, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, which mock the highest Flights of Philosophy. I mean recorded Providence, by which, connected with Promises, he is enabled to judge of the *Changes and Wars*, which pass over himself, and the Church of God: the sacred History informs him

of the past Events of Providence; and Prophecy puts back the Veil and shews him Things to come.

I call my heavenly Student THEOPHILUS, and assert that though he may not have one Grain of the Learning of PHILOLOGUS, he is in the Road to higher Preferment; in the Road to be a white robed Dignitary in the Church above, and to sit as an Assessor with Jesus, in *judging the World and Angels*: when, if ungodly, and unjust, the mitred Bishop, and ermined Judge shall stand at the Bar.

The imitative Art is the Believer's Study: his Work rises superior to the finished Statue, and the illuminated Picture. He forms and draws a living Character of Holiness and Beauty, while he imitates the *Father of Mercies*, and the *holy Child Jesus*. If the Works of Artists transmit their Fame to the latest Posterity, *the Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance*: the Character they formed shall abide for ever, they leave not their Works behind them, *their Works shall follow them*.

Are Christians destitute of Passion, and dead to Enjoyment? By no Means: animated by the noblest Impulse, they press with
Ardor

Ardor toward supreme Happiness, and feel their Hearts at Times captivated by Beauty. *The Love of CHRIST constrains them to spend and be spent for him who loved and died for them: nor shall they ever have Cause to complain that the more they love, the less they are beloved.*

The Love of GOD shed abroad in the Heart by the Holy Ghost, is the highest Transport Mortality can feel. It is a Foretaste and Earnest of Joys above, and awakens Desire for the full Possession: as the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, so thirsteth my Soul for GOD; the living GOD, when shall I come and appear before GOD?

- " Rivers to the Ocean run,
- " Nor stay in all their Course:
- " Fire ascending seeks the Sun,
- " Both speed them to their Source:
- " So a Soul that's born of God,
- " Pants to view his glorious Face:
- " Upward tends to his Abode,
- " To rest in his Embrace."

As Subterfuge and Villany are incompatible with Christianity, in what shall we parody the Believer with VOLPONE? in nothing but his Thirst of Gain: and this in him is laudable. He grasps at Wealth, which

which worldly Fools despise, and win the Crown they play away for Vanities.

Was I writing to any other than SYNTYCHE, I might apologize for the Length of this Letter, but your Friendship will excuse my Prolixity; besides, few Men are tired of being told what they are, or at least, earnestly wish to be. For what you are that is right, *give Glory to GOD, and press toward the Mark, for the Prize of your high Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS.* Yet a little while, and we shall leave VANITY FAIR, and all the Fools and foolish Things that are in it: they have often vexed our Spirit; but I trust we shall get safe to that Country, *whose Merchants are all Princes, and whose Traffickers are the only honourable of the Earth.* Peace with my Friend. Amen.

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XVIII.

THE Conduct of the Pilgrims in VANITY FAIR, is a beautiful Description of the Manner in which good Men should conduct

conduct themselves, under Temptation, Persecution and Sufferings from the World.

They set light by the Merchandise of the Place, and cared not so much as to look upon it. To keep our Hearts, we must make *a Covenant with our Eyes*. The Sense of seeing, is more dangerous than all the other Senses, because by it, outward Objects strike the Imagination with more frequency and greater Force: and the Ear next to the Eye, seems to have the greatest Influence upon the Mind. No Doubt the other Senses minister their Quota to the Power of Temptation; but their Sphere of Operation, seems to be more circumscribed, and consequently less dangerous.

It was to the Ears and Eyes of our Mother Eve, that the Tempter applied: yet, artful as his Address to the Ear was, the Temptation had perhaps been ineffectual, had she not looked upon the Tree: *And when the Woman SAW the Tree, that it was good for Food, and pleasant to the Eyes, and a Tree to be desired to make one Wise: she took of the Tree and did eat.* ACHAN confessed, and said, *When I SAW among the Spoils, a goodly Babylonish Garment, and two hundred Shekels*

Shekels of Silver, and a Wedge of Gold of fifty Shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them. DAVID sinned from the same Cause. *He saw from the Roof of the King's House, a Woman washing herself, and the Woman was very beautiful to look upon, and he sent Messengers and took her, and she came in to him, and he lay with her. And JOB* says, *I have made a Covenant with mine Eyes, wherefore should I look upon a Maid.*

We should guard strictly those Senses, which are the easiest Avenues to let in Temptation. The Pilgrims put their Fingers in their Ears, and looking upward, cried, *Turn away mine Eyes from beholding Vanity.* Indeed without Prayer we watch to little Purpose: and Prayer without Watching and Resistance, is solemn Mockery. *My Son, when Sinners entice thee, consent thou not: and again, Look not upon the Wine when it sparkleth, when it sheweth itself a-right in the Glass.* Various are the Objects which sinfully impress the Mind by the Eye, and the Sounds which pollute the Imagination by the Ear. Our best Defence, is to turn away from them, and seek our Safety in our Flight.

It is from the Purpose of the Heart, the Resolution must arise to guard the Senses,

as Avenues to the Mind. *Keep thine Heart with all Diligence, for out of it are the Issues of Life.* Happy those who have weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary, the Objects which solicit them, and determine to *buy the Truth*, even at the Price of Blood: the Purchase will be cheap, when compared with the Price of Vanity, which has cost many an one their Soul. This firmly believed, will settle the Heart, and fix its Resolution, to guard the Senses. *To receive the Truth in the Love of it*, lies at the Bottom of all real Religion: and our Preference of that Truth, it is, which provokes the Children of this World.

“ *We buy the Truth,*” said the Pilgrims, and Satan determined they should pay for it; they did so, and our Author in his Narrative shews us that the Malice of Satan, and his working in the Children of Disobedience, is a Source of Sufferings to the Saints for their Adherence to the Truth. Persecution has been variable as to Mode and Measure, in different Ages; as God has been pleased for the Trial of Faith to let loose the Lions; or, to give his People Rest has chained them up; yet be assured, *SYN-tyche*, the Disposition of the World is always

ways Enmity to God and his Ways. But as I have in a former Letter touched upon this Subject, I shall dismiss it here, with only two Remarks.

The first is, the convincing Power and Influence of a proper Behaviour under Sufferings: patient bearing of Injuries for CHRIST's Sake, is true Christian Fortitude and will be always more effectual to disarm the Rage of our Enemies, than all Arguments whatsoever. And as the exemplary Conduct of those, who suffer for the Truth, conciliates an Attention to their Principles, so it is the Means of bringing many to the Knowledge of the Truth, who would never have attended to the Force of Argument: thus JESUS suffered.

Secondly, one cannot look back without Indignation and Horror upon the Farce of mock Justice affectedly acted by the persecuting Powers, who murdered the faithful Servants of JESUS CHRIST; what Prostitution of the Forms of Law, to commit the most lawless Act in the World. A Judge, a Jury, and Witnesses upon their Oath. Blessed JESUS! when thy Tribunal shall be erected, where will these Wretches appear? *Precious in thy Sight is the Blood*

of

of thy Saints, and thou wilt require it at their Hands.

He limits the Effects of their Rage, and sets Bounds to the Operation of their Malice. HEROD killed JAMES the Brother of JOHN with the Sword, and proceeded to take PETER also: and when HEROD would have brought him forth to be slain, that same Night the Angel of the LORD delivered him from Prison. FAITHFUL falls a Sacrifice to the Enmity of the Wicked, and goes to Heaven in Triumph; but CHRISTIAN must escape to keep the Truth alive upon Earth; and HOPEFUL rises from the Ashes of the Martyr, to be his Companion. In spite of Earth, and Hell, *a Seed shall serve him, and be accounted to the LORD for a Generation.*

What an admirable Piece of Wit and Humour, exposing and satyrising the Hypocrisy and Wickedness of Persecutors; is Mr. BUNYAN's Description of the Trial of FAITHFUL: how ingeniously does he personify their wicked Dispositions and Vices, and form them into a Court of Judicature: the Judge stating the Law to the Jury, is an inimitable Burlesque on persecuting Laws and Acts of Uniformity.

They

That the Churches have Rest, is Matter of Praise and Thankfulness ; nevertheless the Martyrs Lot was glorious : by a few short Pangs, though sharp, their Sufferings were terminated for ever : they escaped from a World of Danger, and got beyond the Reach of Satan's Malice. The Martyr, of all the Followers of the LAMB, is most nearly conformable to his Master, *he is crucified with CHRIST, has Fellowship with him in his Sufferings, and is made conformable to his Death.* When we speak of those Scriptures, we seek a spiritual Meaning to them, and no Doubt a good one ; but in the Martyr, the literal Sense of such Passages shine with peculiar Glory.

As the Martyrs approached nearest their glorious Pattern by suffering for Truth, and sealing it with their Blood ; so they approach nearest in Glory to the KING of Martyrs above all his other Saints. The Conviction of this, wrought so powerfully in the primitive Church, that many sought the Crown of Martyrdom with Avidity ; and obtruded themselves upon their Persecutors as willing Victims. I do not say they were to be commended for seeking Death ; but it was divinely heroic not to shun

shun it. O, my SYNTYCHE, that our Faith and Zeal bore a greater Similarity to theirs, that we were animated with a Flame

“ Such as in the Martyrs glow’d,

“ Dying Champions for their God.”

Well, no Doubt, as our *Day is, our Strength shall be*: we are not called to die for JESUS, let us strive to live to him. And now, if you please, we will quit VANITY-FAIR, and follow our Pilgrims on their Way.

When GOD takes away one Blessing, he often gives another: CHRISTIAN, by the Death of FAITHFUL lost a dear Friend and Companion, but GOD raised up for him another, who was peculiarly dear to him from this Circumstance, that he became HOPEFUL by beholding the Patience and Fidelity of the Pilgrims in their Sufferings. If GOD honours us as the Means of saving others, they are more dear to us upon that Account, and the Bond of Love between them and us is more strong: and if our Conduct rather than our Words, have effected this, it is a comfortable Testimony to our Consciences, that through Grace we have been enabled to act to the Glory of GOD. ONESSIMUS was dear to PAUL, even as
his

his own Bowels, because he had begotten him in his Bonds.

Our Author gives us a general View of Hypocrisy at the Bottom of the Hill DIFFICULTY. He now delineates it on a larger scale : traces it through its wretched Principles, and shews their Contrariety to the *Simplicity and godly Sincerity* of the Saints ; and their Coincidence with *fleshly Wisdom*. The Subject is beautifully illustrated by making Personages of the four leading Principle of Hypocrisy : namely, BY-ENDS, HOLD-THE-WORLD, MONEY-LOVE, and SAVE-ALL ; and by putting into their Mouths, the Sentiments which govern the Hypocrites Heart.

Would you, SYNTYCHE, wish to shun the Cross (which God forbid) Mr. BY-ENDS will teach you how to do it effectually : and Mr. HOLD-THE-WORLD will furnish you with Argument to varnish your Conduct. Instructed by these Gentlemen, you will not only shun the Cross, but make Religion a profitable Commodity : let us a little attend to their Doctrine and Practice.

Their Doctrine is as old as the Apostles : there were some of them, *who supposed that Gain was Godliness*, and even disputed for it,

it, like Mr. MONEY-LOVE : but the Apostle calls their Arguments *perverse Disputings of Men of corrupt Minds* : and CHRISTIAN'S Answer to the Question deserves to be written in Letters of Gold, or rather upon the Tablets of our Hearts. This Doctrine founded in Covetousness, and the inordinate Love of this World, is boldly contended for by some, and believed and practised by many more.

The practical Part is, as Mr. BYE-ENDS tells us, to have a smooth Tongue and Behaviour, to serve ourselves of the Times as they change, and to turn about with them : nay, if Necessity require it, to be one Thing in one Place, and another Thing in another Place : to be double tongued, and double faced : to be warmly zealous, or coldly indifferent, as we are likely to get or lose by Religion.

From such, says the Apostle, *turn away* : honest CHRISTIANS should manifest a Contempt for such Characters, and shun them as they would Drunkards, Whoremongers, and Adulterers. *Covetousness is Idolatry*, and not to be named among Saints, but as what it is : when Religion is taken up to gratify that Disposition, it is the most detestable

testable Hypocrisy : *Such*, says the LORD, *receive the greater Damnation.*

Our Way to the Kingdom of Heaven is, for the most Part, rough and troublesome ; what with the Wickedness of Men, the Temptations of Satan, the various Trials of Life ; and above all, our own inbred Corruptions, we are often weary and distressed ; yet sometimes our gracious LORD gives us Rest from Trouble for a Season : he smooths our rugged Path and makes it plain and easy, by *stilling the Enemy and the Avenger* without ; and by his Grace, stopping the Workings of our Corruptions within. It is then pleasant going on in the Ways of the LORD : but, alas ! such Seasons are short and soon over ; nor are they altogether without their Danger, for our poor depraved Hearts extract Evil from every Good.

'Till cured of our Folly, by repeated Disappointments, we flatter ourselves with a Continuance of Peace, and vainly hope that the Plain of EASE extends to the Gates of the CELESTIAL CITY : that our Troubles are over, our Corruptions dead, and our Mountain stands strong, never to be moved.

“ When

- “ When my forgetful Soul renews
- “ The Savour of thy Grace,
- “ My Heart presumes I cannot lose
- “ The Relish all my Days.
- “ But ere one fleeting Hour is past,
- “ The flattering World employs
- “ Some sensual Bait to seize my Taste,
- “ And to pollute my Joys.”

Let us, my Friend, be thankful for the Intermissions of Trouble, for a Cessation of the Assaults of Satan, and for a little Rest from the worst of Plagues, the Risings of our own Corruptions; without which, Trouble and Temptation would not have half their Effect. But let us remember, that the Warfare is not ended—cannot in the Nature of Things be ended, till we put off this Tabernacle, and get beyond the Reach of Sin and Satan. Let us be watchful, lest that which is in itself a Blessing, become a Cause of carnal Security; and, lest future Temptations assault us when off our Guard, and the unexhausted Workings of our depraved Nature be a Cause of Sin: *Blessed is the Man that feareth always.*

The greatest of all the Dangers arising from our Rest from Trouble, is a too fond Attachment to the Things of the present World,

World, and too great a Desire after them, even to the Ensnaring of our Souls. Our Author has therefore placed his little Hill LUCRE with its silver Mine, on the farther Side of the Plain of EASE. Riches in the Way of Godliness, are a Rarity: especially the Acquisition of them. The Religion of JESUS, is more calculated to lose, or to expend Worldly Treasure, than to accumulate it. Does this seem strange? let us examine if it is not true.

Recollect what Multitudes have suffered *the Spoiling of their Goods*, for their Fidelity to him who said, *He that loveth House or Land, more than me, is not worthy of me.* Persecution has robbed the Saints of many Thousands of Pounds, and involved Persons of affluent Fortunes in Poverty. Recollect also, how the artless Simplicity, and unsuspecting Candor of God's Children, exposes them to the artful Designs of cunning and imposing Persons; who work upon their Pity, and deceive their Credulity. Recollect, that Bounty, Generosity, Hospitality and Charity, are not the Means of laying up, but of laying out a Fortune: put all these together, and I believe my Position will be found true.

To

To accumulate Wealth, is in any Case, a Rarity; the Number of those who fail in the Attempt is much larger than the Number of those who succeed : to acquire it in the strait and narrow Way, which leads to Life, is the greatest Rarity of all. It does not seem to be the Will of God, that many of his Children should be rich in this World's Goods, *Not many such are called, but God has chosen the Poor that they might be rich in Faith.* The Hill LUCRE stands somewhat out of the Way, and they that will profit by the MINE, must turn aside for it.

That many Professors have done, and still do so, we have awful Proofs : but what was the Consequence? " They advanced so near the Brink of the Pit, that the Ground under them being deceitful, broke, and they were slain : " Or take it in Scripture Words : *They that WILL be rich, fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Destruction and Perdition.* " Others have been, maimed, and could not, to their dying Day, be their own Men again." *For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil: which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the*

K

Faith,

Faith, and pierced themselves through with many Sorrows;

Are Riches then unlawful? certainly not: but it is unlawful to go out of the LORD's Way to get them. Men stop, and turn aside to acquire Wealth, intending when they have acquired their Object, to go on their Way again. They even flatter themselves and others, how charitable and useful they shall be in the Ways of GOD, when they have acquired Riches: but, alas! many of them are never more seen in the Way of GOD: or if they are, they are so clogged, and cumbered with *thick Clay*, that they are not the lively, zealous, and humble Christians, they were in a State of Mediocrity. The Attempt is vain, to temper the Love of Money with the Love of CHRIST.

DEMAS hath forsaken me, says PAUL, *having loved this present World.* Indeed the Temptation is strong, when Poverty and Affliction press hard upon the Flesh. It is no easy Task to Flesh and Blood, to receive PAUL's Doctrine: *Godliness with Contentment is great Gain. For we brought Nothing into the World with us, and it is certain we can carry Nothing out: and having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content.* No wonder,

wonder, DEMAS, and others who affect to be Gentlemen, should turn aside: Alas! how many Disciples have had hankering Hearts for this World's Goods; and had not Grace prevented, would have turned aside also.

How great the Blessing of a faithful Friend and Reprover? Few have the Courage to assume the Character, and Few the Humility and Meekness necessary to bear Reproof: especially, when it is to hold a Man back from getting Money.

If any Man draw back, saith the LORD, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him. Whether it be through Fear of Suffering, or Desire of Gain, the Sin is the same, and the Punishment as sure. Remember Lot's Wife, is an awful Memento. I leave my Friend, to attend to the Pilgrim's Discourse on that Subject: May Grace impress it on both our Hearts, is the Prayer of

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XIX.

COME, SYNTYCHE, our Author is leading us into a delightful rural Scene—a

Meadow ever verdant, decorated with Lilies ever blooming—watered by a River clear as Christal, on whose Banks grow Trees, always green, and always bearing, yielding Food and Medicine, Ease and Pleasure, to the weary Traveller. I know not, Friend of my Heart, how, at this Moment, it fares with thy Soul; but mine wants this Refreshment, and fain would I avail myself of it. *I am black, because the Sun hath looked upon me: My Mother's Children have been angry with me; they made me the Keeper of the Vineyards, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept. Tell me, SAVIOUR of Sinners, thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy Flocks to rest at Noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the Flocks of thy Companions.*

Here would I dwell might I be permitted, till removed to Canaan above: of which Country, this beauteous Scene is but a Type: but well I know this River and my Path may part, as they have done before; and Weariness assail my Soul from the Roughness of my Way. Well, let it but lead me to the Kingdom of God, all will be well.

How

" How harsh soe'er the Way,

" Dear Saviour still lead on :

" Nor leave me till I say,

" Father, thy Will be done."

He maketh me to lie down in green Pastures, be leadeth me beside the still Waters—he restoreth my Soul—he leadeth me in the Paths of Righteousness for his Namesake. Thus sang the Shepherd King of Israel, of God his Shepherd, who has thus *provided of his own Goodness for the Poor.* It is his Word, the *Healing Waters of the Sanctuary, the Water of Life*, which like a flowing River runs through all his Ordinances, and makes them profitable to his Saints. His precious Promises, like Trees ever green and constantly bearing, yield the Believer a constant Supply for Nuture and Healing: In these Ordinances, pervaded and enlivened by the River of God, the humble Soul—the lowly Saint—the Gospel Lily—thrives and flourishes in the Beauties of Holiness. Here Believers, as the Beloved of the LORD, eat and drink, and rest in Safety.

I repeat my Wish, that here I might dwell till I remove to Canaan: but providential Occurences sometimes cut us off from our Privileges, and render our Way

wearisome to our Souls: so it was with our Pilgrims; they were discouraged and wished for a better Way. They soon found one, but dearly to their Cost; and purchased their Ease at a dreadful Price.

To wish for Ease is natural, and we are indulged to pray for it with Submission: but in attempting to avoid Trouble, it behoves us to be very careful we are not deceived and led into Sin: *He that believeth shall not make haste*, it is said: and again, *Judge not according to Appearance, but judge righteous Judgment*. That Path which deceived CHRISTIAN, lay along by the Way, and seemed to promise to bring them into the high Road again. Of the two Ways which pointed alike, he thought it wise to choose the Easiest, and did not consider the Hedge, or the Stile, as an Objection, though they separated the Path from the Highway.

The Way of the LORD, the Path of Duty is fenced by the Word; to go out of that Way is to transgress: and as the Trouble of that Way is designed for the Trial of our Faith and Patience, to go out of it, is setting up our carnal Reason against the Wisdom of God; and whither that may lead us, God only knows.

It is easier to the Flesh to follow its own Inclinations, than the Will of God; and our Folly is emboldened, by the Example of others, who walk after the Flesh, and yet like VAIN-CONFIDENCE, presume that BY-PATH-MEADOW is the Way to the celestial City. It is dangerous to follow the Example of any but those, *who through Faith and Patience do inherit the Promises*. These all kept the high Way of Holiness, or suffered deeply when they departed from it, and are exhibited in the Word as *Ensamples to us*. Let us then take Warning, and choose Suffering rather than Transgression.

Mark, my dear Friend, the awful Consequences of departing from the Way. Darkness involves our Path, and *He that walketh in Darkness knoweth not whither he goeth*: if we forsake the Light of God's Word, the Light of his Spirit will forsake us, and give us up to our own Deceivings, till we learn our Error by its Consequences, and find ourselves in such a Dilemma, as to be obliged to cry for his Help.

Not Darkness only, but horrid Danger is in the Way of Transgression: every Step we take without the Word, we are exposed to Destruction. *The Fool passeth on and is*

punished: the vainly Confident, and Presumptuous, perish in the Way. Happy for us, if we are awakened by their Fall to a Sense of our Danger, and hear that Warning to Repentance, *Let thine Heart be toward the Highway, even the Way that thou wentest, turn again.*

But oh! how Difficult it is to return from our Wanderings, when Darknes and Tempests within, terrify the Soul: When the Guilt of Sin, and a Sense of the Wrath of God, harrows up the Conscience, and Troubles without, like a Flood, almost overwhelm us: we see, and feel then indeed, *that it is an evil Thing, and bitter, that we have departed from the LORD*; and that it is much easier to sin, than to repent and return. Dreadful Displays of divine Resentment, both in our Consciences and Circumstances, renders Repentance a most difficult Work.

Mark, my SYNTYCHE, with what ingenuoufness CHRISTIAN confesses his Fault, and with what Humility and Affection he deprecates his Brother's Anger: see too, the Gentleness, Meekness, and Kindness of HOPEFUL: here is no reproaching of one another—no angry Expostulations—no
 taunting

taunting Reflections—but a tender Sympathy—a feeling Concern for each other's Good. Amiable Example of brotherly Love, and of Spirits and Tempers *delivered into the Mould of the Gospel.*

So far it was well: though Darkness covered their Path, Grace, still had the Possession of their Soul; the Root of the Matter was in them. Blessed be the LORD, that though our Wanderings, and Departures from the right Way, involve us in Trouble and Distress; they cannot destroy that implanted Principle, which is in those *who are born again of the incorruptible Seed of GOD's Word.*

To return to our Pilgrims in their Distress: With all their Skill, they could not recover the Stile that Night; but setting down under a Shelter, and being weary they fell asleep. When GOD withdraws his Presence from us, *We grope like the Blind at Noonday*, and without his special Guidance, cannot recover the Path we have forsaken. *He, saith DAVID, refresheth my Soul, and leadeth me in the Paths of Righteousness.* The Pilgrims did what they could to get back again, this was right; but I do not read that they cried to GOD

for Light and Help. Sin and Sorrow seem to have shut up their Hearts: A Case too frequent. Oh, if the Heart be awake to Prayer, Deliverance is not very far off.

As the Drowning catch at every Twig, so the weary Mind embraces every Shelter: false Refuges and Reliefs, delay Deliverance, and bring a sleepy *Stupor* upon the Mind, which must be roused by still greater Trouble. The Pilgrims did wrong, when they left the Highway, they did still more foolishly to sleep before they recovered it: how careful and watchful should we be, *lest our Hearts be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin.*

Day will succeed to Night, and Light take Place of Darkness: but not always the Light of Joy, but the Light of Conviction: such a Light as places Transgression, and its Fruits, in the most upbraiding Point of View; and awakens the Conscience, to thunder in the Soul, *Hast thou not procured this unto thyself? see thy Way in the Valley.* Alas! if CHRIST and his Righteousness appear not now to support the Mind, the Temptation to Despair seizes the Soul with the Strength of a GIANT, and imprisons it in DOUBTS and FEARS which are stronger than the Bars of a CASTLE

It

It appears strange that Believers of long standing, who have experienced much of the LORD's Faithfulness, and tasted of his Lovingkindness, who have triumphed in the Cross of CHRIST, and rejoiced in Hope of his Glory; it appears strange, I say, that these should doubt, and be tempted to despair. But let us recollect, that in Trouble, Darkness, and Guilt; the Mind is as little able to look back, as it is to look forward properly: besides, the Doubt is whether past Experiences were not all Delusion? a Doubt this, against which there is but one Remedy, a fresh Application by Faith to JESUS CHRIST, which the natural Legality of the Heart will hold it back from: besides, the Darkness of the Mind hinders it from perceiving the glorious Light of the Gospel.

Doubts about the State of our Souls or Circumstances, brings the Mind under the Power of DIFFIDENCE, as to all the Means of Deliverance; and enervates the Disposition towards Endeavours after Relief. DIFFIDENCE then co-operates with Temptation: perhaps it would be speaking more properly to say it is a Part of it. We read nothing about Prayer till the third Night of the PILGRIMS Imprisonment.

The Progress of DESPAIR is strikingly marked in the Description our Author gives of the GIANT'S Conduct toward his Prisoners. DESPAIR cuts off every Support and Comfort from the Soul, as when Bread, Water, and Light, are denied the Captive in the Dungeon. DESPAIR bruises, and breaks the Soul with bitter Reflections, till, *weary of its Groaning, it chuses Strangling rather than Life*, and is tempted to such a Refuge. Faith in, Love to, and Dependance upon the LORD, seem at their last Gasp.

- " Deep in a cold and joyless Cell,
- " A doleful Gulph of gloomy Care!
- " Where dismal Doubts and Darkneſs dwell,
- " The dang'rous Brink of black Despair;
- " Chill'd by the icy Damps of Death,
- " I feel no firm-Support of Faith.
- " How can a burden'd Cripple riſe?
- " How can a fetter'd Captive flee?
- " Ah, LORD! direct my wiſhful Eyes,
- " And let me look, at leaſt, to Thee.
- " Alas! my ſinking Spirits droop,
- " I ſcarce perceive a Gleam of Hope."

When ſtrong Chriſtians err from the right Way of the LORD, they are moſt generally in the deepeſt Deſpondency under Trouble: while others who were thought inferior to them in Grace and Faith, combat

bat Temptation, by looking back to past Experience, and forward to the Power of God, as an Encouragement to hope in his Mercy. Thus HOPEFUL reasons with his Brother, and encourages himself to pluck up the Heart of a Man, and to try his Utmost to break the Bondage of DESPAIR.

Believers are never left of God to the full Power of DESPAIR: he invisibly supports and relieves them by some lucid Intervals, which afford a faint and glimmering Hope, and which are the Harbingers of Deliverance, as the Daystar is of the Morning. *Say not in thine Heart, who shall ascend to Heaven to bring down CHRIST from above, or who shall descend into the Deep to bring CHRIST up from beneath? for it is nigh thee, in thy Mouth, and in thine Heart, even the Word of Faith.* God works Deliverance, and brings Comfort by the Word of Promise. We depart from, and dishonour him by Unbelief; so we must come back to, and honour him by Faith in his Word of Grace.

That Soul is brought low indeed that cannot pray: how then can they believe? it is impossible in the Nature of Things: *and how shall they call on him in whom they do*

do not believe. Faith and Prayer are inseparable. When therefore the tempted Soul begins to pray, Faith is working towards Deliverance; and he who *pours out the Spirit of Grace and Supplication*, is not far off. *Fear not*, says the LORD, *for I am with thee: be not dismayed*, (if thou canst pray to me) *I am thy GOD, I will help thee, yea, I will deliver thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right Hand of my Righteousness.*

"What a Fool am I?" said CHRISTIAN, "to lie in a stinking Dungeon, when I may walk at Liberty. I have a Key in my Bosom called PROMISE, that will open any Lock in DOUBTING CASTLE." Good CHRISTIAN, how came this Key into thy Remembrance, and why was it not thought of before? Thanks to that good Spirit the COMFORTER: *for he, says JESUS, shall bring to your Remembrance all Things whatsoever I have said unto you.* It is strange, that in our Trouble and Darkness, we should forget the Promises of Grace, even those very Promises in which we have formerly rejoiced, and with which we have comforted others: It is also equally wonderful, how unexpectedly and seasonably, even in the Moment of Extremity, some pre-
cious

cious Promise shall occur, which shall at once revive our Faith and Hope, and point out our Duty at the same Time.

These Experiences of Christians are no Evidence to the World, of the Truth of God's Word, and the Presence of his Spirit with his Saints; but to them, they are precious Proofs, and comfortable Manifestations of his Presence, and of the Truth of all he has called them to believe. *The Sorrows of Death*, said David, *compassed me about, the Pains of Hell gat hold upon me: I found Trouble and Sorrow. Then called I upon the Name of the LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my Soul. Because he hath inclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.*

All Doubts are not overcome with equal Ease: some of them are stubborn, and require a Strength of Faith in the Promises of God; yet all of them in the End shall be overcome: the Powers of Darkness too, will exert their Influence to keep their Captive in Bondage, and urge Doubt upon Doubt to strengthen the Cause of GIANT-DESPAIR. Our Author's Words, in all the old Editions of his PILGRIM was, that the Iron Gate, as it opened, made such damnable

nable Cracking, that it waked **GIANT-DE-SPAIR** : by which Expression he seems to intimate the Unwillingness of our spiritual Enemies to let go their Prey. Modern Editors have left out the Epithet damnable, as having a prophane Sound. I think they have done well, because, as it stood in the old Editions unexplained, it offended some serious People, and it is better to lose one of the Author's Ideas, than hurt the Mind of one godly Person : yet perhaps, if the Editors had understood the Metaphor, they might have found a Word to express the Idea without Offence.

Our **PILGRIMS** being delivered, do two Things which are the Duty of all who obtain Mercy of the **LORD** : they erected a Memorial of the Danger of turning out of the Way, that others coming after, might escape the Sufferings they had gone through. They then sang Praises to **GOD** for their Deliverance, and went on their Way. Recording our own Observations, on the Errors into which we have fallen, and on the Consequences which followed them; may be made of special and peculiar Use to our fellow Christians, by Way of Warning : and recording also, the abundant Grace of **GOD**

GOD toward us in hearing Prayer, and working our Deliverance; may tend to encourage those whose *Hope is as the giving up of the Ghost*, to look again toward his holy *Temple*: farewell, SYNTYCHE, take Care of BY-PATH-MEADOW, for though Mr. GREAT-HEART cut off the GIANT'S Head, I fear DESPAIR is like the Hydra: thine affectionately

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XX.

AS there are Sorrows, Distresses, and Dangers in the Way, or rather often in Consequence of turning out of the Way; and these of our own procuring through Folly and Want of Heed:—as there are Temptations for the Trial of our Faith, and Troubles that are irksome to our Flesh; it is no Wonder that those who estimate Religion only by these Things, should think it but a melancholy Business. But as a Believer's *Heart knows its own Bitterness*, so a *Stranger meddleth not with his Joy*, he has Consolations, and strong ones too, which he derives from various Sources, opened to him by divine Grace.

One

One of those Sources is, the Spread of the Gospel, the Increase of CHRIST'S Kingdom, and the Prosperity of his Saints. The Psalmist prays for this with Fervor: *Remember me, O LORD, with the Favour thou bearest unto thy People; O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the Good of thy Chosen—that I may rejoice in the Gladness of thy Nation—that I may glory with thine Inheritance.* So likewise PAUL: GOD, who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of TITUS, and not by his coming only, but by the Consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, (that is the Corinthians,) when he told us, your earnest Desire, your Mourning, your fervent Mind toward me, so that I rejoiced the more.

Our Pilgrims are come to the DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS, called also IMMANUEL'S LAND. The Description of them, as consisting of Gardens, Orchards, Vineyards, and Fountains of Water, Shepherds and Flocks; all agree with the prophetic Hieroglyphics which describe the Spread of the Gospel, and the Settlement of Churches under the Blessing of the Most High. They are called Mountains, because such Eminences afford a more extensive

tensive Prospect than lowly Plains: So Church Privileges and Gospel Ordinances, lead to more numerous and extensive Views of divine Things, than solitary Religion.

Such a blessed State of Things is thus described by the Prophet. *They shall feed in the Ways, and their Pasture shall be in all high Places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the Heat nor Sun smite them, for be that bath Mercy on them shall lead them, even by the Springs of Water shall be guide them, and I will make all my Mountains a Way, and my Highways shall be exalted.*

When, my SYNTYCHE, I look through the Metropolis, and compare its present State, as to visible Religion, with what it was when I was a Youth; I cannot but conclude, that a Portion of the Blessing prophesied above, is bestowed upon the present Day. What a Number of Temples, sacred to JESUS and his Gospel, have been opened? what large Congregations croud their Walls, and what burning and shining Lights have appeared in their Pulpits? nor is there the least Appearance of declining Zeal, or Departure of the external Glory. God grant that the Spirit and Power of Religion may keep Pace with its outward Progress. I re-

I remember the Time, when parochial Pulpits were almost universally shut against evangelical Preaching, and when it was only to be found among the Protestant Dissenters; with whom also it was become an almost dry and insipid Form of Orthodoxy. One despicably mean and boarded Shed, called the Tabernacle, the most perfect Contrast of that in the Wilderness that can possibly be imagined; was the only Place where the Light of Truth, and the Fire of Zeal seemed to be conspicuously united. I say nothing of its neighbour Place, where IGNATIUS perverted the Simplicity of the Gospel with his Sophistry.

In this Shed, EUODIAS and his Associates held forth the Torch of Truth. The Word ran, and was glorified, and neighbouring Churches caught the Flame. EUODIAS reared round the despicable Shed, the decent Walls of that Building which now supplies its Place. Encouraged by the Smile of Heaven on this Work, EUODIAS reared another Temple at the West Extremity of the Town: and Thousands Flocked to hear the Word. His Zeal gave the Example to others. AMPLIAS in the South, and SELINA in the North and other Parts of this widely extended Habitation of Men,

Men, followed his Steps, and the Seal of God appears upon their Endeavours to spread his Gospel: Multitudes, apparently hungering and thirsting, flock to hear the Word.

Forgive me, Friend, this little Digression, it has not been very foreign to our Subject, but we will now return. On these DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS were Shepherds feeding their Flocks, and standing by the Highway-Side to receive all who came. They told the PILGRIMS that the Flocks were IMMANUEL's, and that he laid down his Life for them: and that the LORD of these MOUNTAINS had given them a Charge not to be forgetful to entertain Strangers. May the Ministers of JESUS never forget, how dear their Flocks are to him; and how grand the Motives by which he urges them to Watchfulness and tender Care. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood: feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof, not by Constraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind: neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Ensamples to the Flock: and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.*

The

The Shepherds Names were KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, WATCHFUL, and SINCERE: denoting the Properties indispensibly necessary in the Minister of CHRIST. An ignorant Minister is a most contemptible Creature, an inexperienced one, good for nothing, a careless one is a Murderer, and he who is not sincere, is a Knave. Yet such there are, and there are Fools who are silly enough to encourage them.

A Minister should have Knowledge:—I do not mean of Sciences, or Languages; if he knows them, they may be useful and ornamental, but they are not necessary to constitute a Minister of that Gospel which is calculated for the Poor and Unlearned. It is expedient, for Decency Sake, that he should be able to speak with tolerable Propriety the Language in which he ministers: provided this be above Contempt, the more plain and simple it is, the more likely to be useful.

The Knowledge necessary for a Minister, is a Knowledge of the Bible: of the Sum and Substance of that sacred Book: Its Doctrines, with their Dependencies and Connections: its Promises, Threatnings, Warnings and Exhortations, with their proper

proper Application. *He must study to shew himself approved to God, a Workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

Not only must the Understanding be cultivated with Bible Knowledge; but his Heart must be interested in the Truths: he must know them to be true, from having felt their Power: his Head and Heart must be in unison: or else, if he does not blunder in Doctrine, he will in Application, and wound those whom the Lord would have comforted, and comfort those that should be wounded. If he is a Stranger to Heart-work, he will preach without Savour, and Converse without Profit. When the burdened and broken in Spirit;—the Tempted and Afflicted, come to him in their Trouble; he can feel no Tenderness for them, because he has no Sympathy with them; and when proud and ignorant Boasters talk of Things to which they are Strangers, he will not know how to detect them. The Man of God should be able to say with the Apostle, *That which we have seen with our Eyes—heard with our Ears—and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life, declare we unto you. For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it.*

He

He must be watchful—he must take heed to himself—to his Temper—to his Conduct—to his Ministry, that he fulfil it: exhibiting himself an Example of the Faith, and a Copy of that Holiness he presses upon others. He must watch over the Flock, to *warn the Unruly, to comfort the Feeble-minded, to support the Weak: to admonish, reprove, instruct, and exhort, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine.* He must bind up that which is broken, and seek that which is strayed, and take Heed, lest there be a Root of Bitterness springing up, whereby many may be defiled. If any profane Persons, whose ungodly Example may contaminate others: in short, he must watch to be *free from the Blood of all Men.*

He must be sincere, which implies that he must be faithful and earnest, avoiding all trimming, Time serving, and Men pleasing; all Cowardice and Slothfulness; *not walking in Craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by Manifestation of the Truth commend himself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God.*

Such a Minister all the Universities and Academies in the World cannot produce, as a Creature of their forming: only he who ascended up on High, and received Gifts

Gifts for Men, can bestow the Furniture, and minister the constant Supplies of Grace necessary to constitute such a Character. Such are the Men to whom Jesus says, *Feed my Sheep, feed my Lambs, and lo, I am with you always, even to the End of the World.*

Let us now, SYNTYCHE, walk abroad with the Shepherds and the Pilgrims: you are, I think, fond of a Morning Walk, as being conducive to Health: this little Excursion I promise myself, may be profitable to the Health of our Souls. Let us ascend the Mountain of ERROR. Good God! what a horrid Precipice, and what Numbers dashed to pieces at the Bottom! But why must Error be called a Mountain? because it lifts Men up in their own Conceits, and makes them *wise above that which is written*: when they are become *vain in their Imaginations*, their Heads grow giddy, and they fall from the Heights to which they have climbed. Opinions, say some, are harmless, and to make a Noise about them, favours of Bigotry and narrowness of Soul; I say so too of some Opinions, but while I read of Heresies and damnable Errors, I must distinguish between Opinion and Opinion; that is, between Opinions

nions which are without pernicious Tendency, and those which draw bad Consequences after them.

Our SAVIOUR told his Disciples, there would be some, who would think the murdering of them, a meritorious Service in the Sight of God; this was their Opinion, but it was a damnable Error, because it led to Persecution and Murder. The Shepherds instance the Doctrine of HYMENEUS and PHILETUS, who said, *the Resurrection was past already.* What Inferences they drew from this Position, we are not informed, but we are told, *their Words did eat like a Canker, did increase Ungodliness, and overthrow the Faith of some: that HYMENEUS and ALEXANDER did blaspheme, had made Shipwreck of Faith and of a good Conscience, and were delivered to Satan.*

When fine spun Speculations, and curious Reasonings, lead Men off from the plain and simple Truth of the Gospel, *they are wiser in their own Conceits, than seven Men who can render a Reason,* and plunge headlong into any Consequences, however absurd or wicked, rather than retract the darling Notion they have adopted, as the Offspring of their own Sagacity. I have

no Inclination to point out to you the Errors of the present Day: *try the Spirits whether they be of God.* Matters of Righteousness and Sin, are plain and obvious to every Conscience; and every Sentiment which is injurious to the Former, and conducive to the Latter, cannot be the Truth of God, but is an Error: thus *Heretics* are not only *subverted* by their Errors, but are *condemned of or in themselves*, that is, in their Consciences.

Let us now ascend Mount CAUTION, and contemplate the Blind, wandering among the Tombs. These, we are told, were Professors, who held on in the Ways of the LORD, till Affliction and Trouble made them weary; and then they transgressed for the Sake of Ease to the Flesh. Transgression! how awful its Consequences! it involves in Guilt: this shuts up in Despair: which blinds the Eyes of the Mind to the free Mercy of a forgiving God to poor Backsliders, and hardens the Heart to Desperation in Sin. The Beginning of Transgression is known, but who knows the End of it?

Let us be cautious, my Friend, let us stand in Awe and sin not; let us take heed

of transgressing with a Design of returning: a Deception the most dangerous of any to us: and a Transgression more insulting to GOD, than the open Rebellion of the Wicked. That there is Mercy for repentant Sinners, is the Glory of the Gospel; but how do we know, when we go over the Stile of Transgression, that we shall find the Stile of Repentance at the other End of the Path?

CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL looked upon each other with Tears in their Eyes, but said nothing to the Shepherds. The Exhortation, *confess your Faults one to another*, is to be understood with limitation. If we have grieved any by our Transgression; confession of our Sin, and profession of Repentance, may comfort them, and remove their Prejudices against us. To confess our Sin to an intimate Companion in the Gospel, in relating our Experience, as CHRISTIAN did to FAITHFUL; may be useful, at least not dangerous: but such is the Frailty of the human Mind, that it might be very injurious to us, to tell, even to the Shepherds, all the Things that humble us, and make us weep before our God.

But to proceed. Our Pilgrims are shewn a By-way to Hell; in contradistinction

tion to the Broad Way which leadeth to Destruction, and where the many walk. It is, I fear, the Delusion of some to run Riot on the Doctrine of the final Perseverance of the Saints: and without understanding it, abuse it to the Danger of their Perdition. Even Preachers do not always express themselves with Scripture Propriety and Caution on this Subject; so as to guard the Doctrine from Abuse, and to secure it as a Source of Consolation to the Believer, who presses on towards the Mark of the Prize of his high Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. The Doctrine is frequently expressed in Scripture with an *If*, and when the *If* is not expressed, it is always implied; *If ye hold fast—if ye do these Things ye shall never fall: he that overcometh—he that endureth to the End*—and many more Declarations of the same kind.

Shall I be told, that there are absolute Declarations of the Perseverance of the Saints to eternal Life? I ask an Explanation of the Phrase: for it is one of those Terms that needs to be accurately defined, being subject to abuse, if not properly understood. Let us attend to a few of these absolute Declarations, and try their logical

Weight. A Few will suffice. Jesus says of his Sheep, *I give unto them eternal Life, they shall never perish—neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand.* But mark, SYNTYCHE, the Connection: *My Sheep bear my Voice, and they follow me.* Again, *who are kept by the Power of GOD, through Faith, unto Salvation:* regard the Connection: *Begotten again unto a lively Hope, and kept THROUGH FAITH.* *Who shall separate us from the Love of CHRIST? shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Sword? For I am persuaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate from the Love of GOD which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.*

Of whom is all this said? of those of whom the whole Chapter speaks, whose Characteristic is, *that they walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit: who mortify the Deeds of the Body, that they may live.* These Declarations, absolute, as they are termed, do imply, though not express an *If*. I fear, therefore, that the Confidence and Hope, which is founded on the Doctrines

trine of final Perseverance, may prove an awful Delusion, if the Conscience, and Experience does not run parallel with the Scripture *If*.

It has been said of Oliver Cromwel, that when near his End, he asked one of his Chaplains, if it was possible for one who was once in CHRIST, to perish? being answered in the Negative, and told, that "Once in CHRIST, always in CHRIST:" he replied, "Then I am safe, I am sure I was once in CHRIST." However true the Doctrine of the Chaplain, it does not follow, that the Inference of the Protector was truth also. I do not mean to judge his eternal State, but I think his Reasoning unsound and unsafe.

To look back to past Experience, as a Means of encouraging Faith and Hope in following God, and as an Incitement to love and cleave to him, is right and useful; but this is very different from a Person's looking back to past Experience, to comfort and support a rotten Hope, to which present Consciousness gives the Lie. Myself knew a Professor, the Stain and Blot of Religion, whose Hope rested on a Work of Grace, or Manifestation of God, experienced about twenty Years before:

he inferred from this, that he could never perish, but must get safe to Glory at last.

I wish, my SYNTYCHE, that you may always believe with unshaken Faith, the Faithfulness of God, and the Perseverance of the Saints, while your Conscience bears you Witness in the HOLY GHOST, that you walk humbly with your GOD : you will derive strong Consolation from it : you will look forward, without slavish Fear, and *hope to the End* ; but hope not for Glory upon Account of what you once was, lest it prove a Delusion, and the Event shew you was much mistaken. ESAU, I doubt not, thought himself safe once : and JUDAS, ANANIAS, SAPPHIRA and ALEXANDER, once believed themselves in CHRIST : you know their End : learn then of the PILGRIMS and the SHEPHERDS, “ to cry to the strong for Strength, and use it when you have it.” To go a Bye-Way to Hell, is to reap Damnation with double Shame.

We read of some falling away who were *once enlightened, who tasted the good Word of GOD, were made Partakers of the HOLY GHOST, and felt the Power of the World to come.* It is hard to say, how far a Person may go : how long he may carry on a Profession,

feſſion, and yet fall away : let it excite us to Humility, Diligence, and Circumſpection, ever looking to JESUS to keep us from falling.

How difficult it is to ſee Danger, without imbibing too much Fear ? The Sight of the Door on the Side of the Hill, made the PILGRIMS Hands ſhake, and prevented a ſteady Look through the Perſpective Glaſs. The Fear of falling ſhort at laſt, may leſſen our rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of God ; but it will prevent us from falling. The Word is our Perſpective, we *behold, as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the LORD's Strength*, of Faith, or Prevalence of Fear, will cauſe our Views to be more or leſs clear and diſtinct. The one ſupports our Hope, the other guards us from Preſumption. Happy he who derives Advantage from both !

I cloſe this Letter, with remarking the precious Advantages of enjoying the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, and having faithful Shepherds to watch over our Souls. The Directions of faithful Miniſters, are highly uſeful to keep us in the Path of Duty : they are like a Note of the Way to a Traveller. Their Warnings and Cautions, if properly attended to, will ſave us from much Trou-

ble and Danger. Our PILGRIMS smarted for forgetting to beware of the FLATTERER; but they reaped the Benefit of remembering to keep awake on the ENCHANTED GROUND. Lastly, the Prayers, and good Wishes of our Pastors, deserve our Gratitude, and a Return in kind: let us pray for them, wish their Prosperity and Success, and take Pleasure in strengthening their Hands and their Hearts: May the CHIEF SHEPHERD make them a continued Blessing to thee, and to

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XXI.

CONCEIT, when it is the Foundation of any Character, is always ridiculous; sometimes dangerous; and in Religion, superlatively so. Were it not that the Ignorance and Presumption of the Conceited, lead them into Premunires, they would be the happiest of Persons; because the constant good Opinion they have of themselves, and of the Wisdom of their own Conduct, always saves them from Self-Reproach.

Reproach. They are Strangers to the painful Feelings which arise from Diffidence: they look forward with the boldest Hope, and backward, without Regret.

I do not know, SYNTYCHE, whether Conceitedness be one of those Consequences of the Fall, which arise from bodily Temperature; as to be sprightly or dull, hasty or gentle, active or indolent; or whether it be an acquired Habit of the Mind, arising from a bad Education, and the Flattery of surrounding Fools. Mr. BUNYAN, by his mentioning the COUNTRY OF CONCEIT, seems to consider it as a natural Disposition; and with him, I think, we must agree, that it is a Disposition calculated to establish the strongest Delusions of Ignorance and Self-Righteousness.

Our Author describes IGNORANCE as a very brisk Lad: because conceited Professors are very pert, forward, and positive. The Dialogue agrees with this Description, and through the Whole of it, we see the Blindness of the carnal Mind to the Evil of Sin, the Extent, and Spirituality of the Law, the Misery and Helplessness of the Sinner, the Glory and Perfection of CHRIST'S Righteousness, and the Necessity of it to Justification.

tification. IGNORANCE was comforted with the Conceit of having a good Heart, full of good Motions; and a good Life full of just and good Actions : no bitter complaining of corrupt Nature ; no Doubts and Fears of falling short at last ; but a vain Confidence, which supported him through Death, and accompanied him even to the Gate of Heaven. He resolutely refuses to admit a Suspicion of his State, till the Flames of Hell scatter his Delusion.

We see, in this Character, a compleat Delineation of all that Religion which has not CHRIST for its Foundation : the various Subterfuges of a self-righteous and deceived Heart, and the Obstinacy with which it cleaves to its own Way. Our Author has been particularly attentive to the Drawing of this Character, and introduces it three Times, that we may see and contemplate it, in its Progress and its End.

What awful Consternation will seize the Souls of such unhappy Ones, when they find their Mistake. We cannot conceive of any Thing more dreadful than to pass through Life in the Belief of being happy hereafter ; and to die in Expectation of entering upon that Happiness : to go and cry LORD, LORD,

open

open to us: we have eat and drank in thy Presence, and thou hast taught in our Streets; and after all this, to be repulsed with, I never knew you, depart from me. To meet with Hell when Heaven was expected, must make Hell double torment. Alas, SYNTYCHE, what Numbers are there under this Delusion! LORD, deliver us from Ignorance and Self-Conceit!

As our Author has been full in delineating this Character, so he has been very plain; and used little or nothing of Metaphor: we will, therefore, dismiss IGNORANCE, at least for the present, and attend to another Character, but tending to the same awful End, namely the Door in the Side of the Hill: this was an awful Sight, and made our PILGRIMS tremble; it was a Man bound with seven strong Cords, and led away by seven Devils.

He also was One who set out for the Kingdom of God, and had proceeded a great Way: not like IGNORANCE, on the Foundation of Pride, and Self-Righteousness; but on the Plan of the Gospel: had walked in the right Way of the LORD; and proved, at last, "a wanton Professor, and damnable Apostate." Perhaps it may
be

be profitable, **SYNTYCHE**, if we look over the Progress of such a Professor——

Their Beginning is often such as promises great Things in the Christian Life : deep Conviction of Sin, and holy Mourning for it : warm Zeal, and even precise Tendernefs of Conscience : much apparent Love to the Doctrines of the Gospel, and Growth in the Knowledge of them, attended with Gifts of Utterance. From such fair Beginnings, who could expect so foul an End, as to be possessed of seven Devils ? Yet so it has happened, more than once, in the Knowledge of thy Friend.

Do you ask where the Deviation from the right Way begins ? I answer, in Pride and Presumption : so lovely and promising an Appearance attracts Respect and Esteem, which begets Pride : a tolerable good Opinion of themselves, supported by the Esteem of others, leads on to carnal Security and Presumption : a light and trifling Spirit takes Place, and Tendernefs of Conscience dies away. Unguarded, and exposed to Temptation ; the Enemy of Souls allures them to a wanton Behaviour and Conduct, and that, often too, under the Notion of Liberty, and Freedom from **LEGALITY**.

JESUS

JESUS says, *When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh up and down seeking Rest, and findeth none; and he saith, I will return to my House from whence I came: and when he returneth, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished: then goeth he and taketh to himself, seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last End of that Man is worse than the Beginning.*

Solomon says, *His own Iniquities shall take the Wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the Cords of his Sins.* The second Possession of Sin and Satan is more violent and strong than the first. Such unhappy Ones become seven-fold more the Slaves of Corruption, than they were before they assumed a Profession of Religion, and their Apostacy is generally marked with indelible Reproach,

The Condemnation of such is terrible indeed: for if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning: for it had been better for them not to have known the Way
of

of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.

I know not, my Friend, in all the World, a Sight so shocking and Heart-wounding, as to see a Professor, once lovely and useful in the Ways of GOD, debased by Satan, and *led captive by him at his Will*: a Slave to Lusts and Corruptions, which would have shocked him in his first carnal State: such a Sight is truly awful, and if we have been in Habits of religious Intimacy with them, it is peculiarly distressing: This TURN-AWAY, at Sight of the PILGRIMS, held down his Head like a Thief that is found: for those wretched Apostates, know not how to bear the Presence of those, who are what they once thought themselves to be. How then will they be able to face him whom they have *crucified afresh, and put to open Shame.*

Let such awful Example teach us to be sober, to be vigilant, because our Adversary the Devil, goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. May he who is able to keep us from falling, present us faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy!

This

This Occurrence of the Man possessed by seven Devils, was in a very dark Lane, by which seems to be meant some Time or Season favourable to the abounding of Iniquity, and unfavourable to Godliness. The Sight the PILGRIMS had seen, called to CHRISTIAN'S Remembrance, a Story he had heard of a PILGRIM, who in that Place was robbed. Times of abounding Iniquity are perilous to Saints as well as others.

To be strong in Faith, giving Glory to GOD, is a Blessing all the Seed of Abraham should seek, and cry with the Disciples, *LORD increase our Faith.* If Faith be weak, and we *stagger at the Promises through Unbelief*; it is much if we do not dishonour GOD, and wound our own Souls, in a Time of Temptation. To have Faith, though but a little of it, is an unspeakable Mercy, because that little Faith has the Promise of eternal Life: but then, it is not likely to abound either in Comforts or Victories, in the Way to Heaven. We ought to love and value sincere Souls, though their Faith be weak: but let us be emulous of following brighter Examples; *who through Faith, wrought Righteousness and obtained Promises.*

Believers should beware of a drowsy, indolent state of Mind: especially when,
and

and where their Enemies are abroad. *Let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober*; is an Admonition always seasonable. LITTLE-FAITH did wrong to sleep at all, but to sleep at the End of DEAD-MAN'S-LANE, was like sleeping at the Mouth of a Lion's Den, or on the Top of a Mast. Time and Place greatly aggravate Faults, and increase Danger. When the LORD the Spirit rouses the Heart with his Call, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead*; and when he sets the Sinfulness of our Sloth before our Consciences; then is the Time that Temptations set in to rob us of our Peace and Comfort.

Where there is but little Faith, Fear makes the Heart faint at the Sight of Difficulty, and mistrustful of the Promises of GOD: and when Fears and Doubts possess the Mind, there is no Peace and Joy in believing, but the contrary. The Soul may pray, and complain, and cry to GOD for its lost Comforts; but where there is but little Faith, Guilt will prevail so as to bear down Hope, and stop the Mouth as to Prayer. DAVID, who was a Man of Faith, complains, that *his Iniquities*, that is, the Remembrance of them, *so overwhelmed him,* that

that he was not able to look up; What then must be the Case with LITTLE-FAITH? Why this,

“When thousand Sins of various Dyes,
 “Corruptions dark and foul,
 “Daily within my Bosom rise,
 “And blacken all my Soul;
 “I groan, and grieve, and cry, and call
 “On JESUS, for Relief;
 “But that delay’d, to doubting fall,
 “Of all my Sins the Chief.”

In a former Letter, I took Notice of the mysterious Nature of those wicked, or distressing Ideas, which seem as if shot into the Mind suddenly: Ideas, so contrary even to some Parts of corrupt, as well as renewed Nature, that we shudder and are terrified at them. The Inference was, that though we could not define the Mode by which Spirits without, could inject, or stir up Thoughts within us; yet Experience established the Fact. This Fact established, begets another Question: Do Spirits without us, know the real State of Things within us? I answer no: only as Physicians know the State of a Patient; that is, by Symptoms; in which, however, they are often deceived: so may our spiritual Enemies. The Thieves who robbed LITTLE-FAITH:

FAITH, fled at the Supposition that the good Man had GREATER GRACE, and a BETTER CONFIDENCE than he really had.

It is well for us that our spiritual Enemies cannot come at the Knowledge of all that passes within us: did they know all, their Opportunities for Mischief would be more frequent than they are: It is also a Mercy that they are afraid of Resistance, and this should animate us to *resist against Sin, striving even unto Blood.*

We come now to consider, what these three Thieves, FAINT-HEART, MISTRUST, and GUILT, took away from LITTLE-FAITH, and what they could *not* rob him of. They robbed him it seems of his SPENDING-MONEY: but his JEWELS, and his CERTIFICATE, they could not take,

By his SPENDING-MONEY, it seems, our Author means those comfortable Frames and Feelings, which are sometimes excited, under the Ordinances of the Gospel, or in private Meditation; and which are what the Family of the LITTLE-FAITH's, principally live upon: so that when these are wanting, to use good CHRISTIAN's Expression, "they go with many a hungry belly:" for they believe and hope, as to their State, very little more than they feel. Now when
the

the Sense of Guilt is more than the Power of Faith, these Comforts cannot subsist, and the poor Child of GOD drags on very heavily and uncomfortably. He has Faith enough to lead him to Heaven, but not enough to comfort him in the Way thither.

DAVID lost his Comforts through Guilt: but being a Man of Faith, he regained them. *I had fainted, said he, unless I had believed to see the Goodness of the LORD in the Land of the Living. Thou who hast shewed me great and sore Trouble, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up from the Depths of the Earth: thou shalt increase my Greatness, and comfort me on every Side: my Tongue also shall talk of thy Righteousness all the Day long: for they are confounded, for they are brought unto Shame that seek my Hurt.*

Contemplate the Life of a Christian in whatever Point of View we may, all Things conspire to shew the Importance of a strong, steady, lively Faith. It is the Hand, the Eye, the active Power of the Soul with regard to CHRIST its Object: it looks to him for Help, it lays hold on him for Strength, it is the Life and Vigour of Hope, and the Ardency of Prayer. *It will not let him go without a Blessing.* It will either pre-serve

serve us from falling, or, when we are down, it will lay hold on God and enable us to rise again.

- “ The Faith that unites to the Lamb,
- “ And brings such Salvation as this,
- “ Is more than mere Notion or Name :
- “ The Work of God's Spirit it is :
- “ A Principle active and young,
- “ That lives under Pressure and Load :
- “ That makes out of Weakness more Strong,
- “ And lifts the Soul upwards to God.

O for a goodly Measure of this precious Grace! let us pray for it, and use the same Means our Father Abraham did to attain it. These were negative and positive; that is, there were some Things which he would not consider as of any Weight at all, when a Promise of God was in question: these were *his own Body as good as dead, for he was an hundred Years old: and the deadness of Sarah's Womb, who was ninety.* And there was one Thing which he considered as of principal Importance, and of this he was fully persuaded; namely, *that God was able to perform what he had promised.* Thus Abraham, against all apparent Hope and Probability, believed in *real and steady Hope*, that he should be *the Father of many Nations*, and the Father of a *Seed, in whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed.* I

I hear you, SYNTYCHE, and will weigh your Objection. It is the Will, and not the Power of GOD, of which you doubt. And why doubt his Willingness? do you mean to compliment his Power, at the Expence of his Goodness and Sincerity? Are not the Promises *all yea and Amen in CHRIST JESUS, to the Glory of GOD by us?* Are they not all of his own Option and Free Grace? Wherefore then doubt his Willingness? Aye, say you, but how do I know the Promises are made to me? I do not doubt but GOD is able to do for me in Spirituals and Temporals all I want, but if he has not promised *to me*, how can I infer any Thing in my Favour from the Will of GOD? Abraham was called by Name, and could not be mistaken: but I am not named in conjunction with the Promises; nor can I know my Interest in them, unless the SPIRIT of God applies and brings them home to my Heart. So, now all is out: the whole ARCANUM of Unbelief, and the Distemper and Weakness of LITTLE-FAITH: but you shall wait for my Reply till my next Letter; Mercy and Peace be with thee, and

ANDRONICUS.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXII.

THE Question between us, SYNTYCHE, is not whether *Faith be the Gift of GOD*, and whether it be *wrought in the Heart by the Spirit of GOD*; because the Scriptures have settled this Point with a literal Plainness that cannot be disputed: but whether the Promises of GOD are Objects of our Faith, simply considered as the *Word of GOD, who cannot Lie*, or whether, to make them Objects of Faith, there must be a particular Application of them by the HOLY GHOST? I assert the former, and deny the latter of these Propositions: and shall give my Reasons both generally and particularly.

And first, generally; the Words of Promise, are the Words of the HOLY GHOST himself, and as such are invariable Truth, and demand my Faith. They are confirmed by the Oath of GOD, *that by two immutable Things, in which it is impossible for GOD to Lie; all who have fled for Refuge to lay hold on the Hope set before us, might have strong Consolation.* The immutable Truth of GOD is then, the Foundation of Faith, and the Source of Consolation.

But

But Secondly and particularly : The LORD himself thus commands. *Him that feareth the LORD, and obeyeth the Voice of his Servant ; if he walk in Darknes and see no Light, let him trust in the LORD, and stay (or lean) upon his GOD.* That this is not a Trust of Hazard, or a blind Confidence, let us hear the Promise itself—*I will lead the Blind by a Way which they know not, and in Paths which they have not known : I will make Darknes Light before them, and crooked Things straight : this will I do unto them, and not forsake them, saith the LORD.*

But again, it is not the Office of the LORD the SPIRIT to make that to be Truth, by particular Application, which was not so before : he mercifully helps our Infirmities, *with Groanings* and Desires which are more and greater, often, than the Tongue can utter. But why this, if we have not already an Interest by Promise in the Things groaned after ? and that independent of a particular Application of that Promise ?

He shall bring to your Remembrance all Things whatsoever, that I have said to you : So JESUS promised. And at Times when we are overwhelmed with our Trouble, and enveloped

in our own Darkness, that gracious Spirit brings, just as it were in nick of Time, for our Relief, a suitable Word of Promise into our Remembrance. But the Promise was true, and involved our Mercies before this Recollection. This is indeed an Application of the Promise to a Time of Need; but does not make it a Whit more true, or give us a Right in it which we had not before. I have often heard good People say, "The LORD gave me such a Promise at such a Time:" as if they had no Right to that Promise before. Would it not be more agreeable to the Scriptures, to say, The LORD brought to my Memory such a Promise? Clearness of Ideas on this Subject, contributes much to spiritual Establishment.

When THOMAS was told of the Resurrection of the LORD JESUS, he would not believe without a particular Application: *Except I see the Print of the Nails in his Hands, and put my Fingers into the Print of the Nails, and thrust my Hand into his Side, I will not believe.* THOMAS was gratified: his indulgent LORD, both in Kindness and Rebuke, said, *Reach hither thy Finger, and behold my Hands, and reach hither thy Hand,*
and

and thrust it into my Side; and be not faithless, but believing. This was a very particular Application indeed; and THOMAS cried, *My LORD! and my GOD!*

I beg my SYNTYCHE will remark the Answer of JESUS. THOMAS, *because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed—blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* The Inference, my Friend, is plain: this Petulance of THOMAS, in doubting the Veracity of the Witnesses of the LORD's Resurrection, and demanding such a particular Manifestation of it to himself; was displeasing to JESUS; and those who believed without it, were praised and commended above him: how much more may we suppose this to be the Case, when God, the Promiser, is called upon for Proof, and peremptorily told, that without a particular Application of the Promise to me, I will not believe?

But GOD, say you, called Abraham by Name, and he could not be mistaken; but I am not named in Conjunction with—Stop SYNTYCHE; Do you know your own Name? Every Man who does, will certainly find it in Conjunction with such Promises, aye, and Threatenings too, throughout the Bi-

ble, as belong to him ; so that, if he does but know his own Name, he cannot mistake what God speaks to him in particular.

Names, in the Application of Scripture Promises, or Threatenings, are not personal ; as, ANDREW, PETER, THOMAS, &c. but Characteristics, as Poor, Needy, Oppressed, Afflicted, Blind, Naked, Proud or Humble, Full, or Hungry and Thirsty, Stout-Hearted, or Broken-Hearted, &c. so that if a Man's Eyes are open to what he is, what his Consciousness makes him feel himself to be, he cannot mistake in taking to himself, whatever he finds in Scripture addressed to the Characteristic he sees and feels to be his own.—God speaks those Words to him in particular, and to all who are like him, with the same Application : and if he believes what is spoken, his Hopes and Fears, will be responsive to the Word, and he will never shut up his Bible, complaining he can find nothing there for him.

That ABRAHAM, and many others were addressed by God, under their personal Names, is true : but then, it was about Matters and Things to which they were called personally, to the Exclusion of all

all other Persons: Things in which they acted as the peculiar Ministers of God, to do his Work and accomplish his Purposes. But Threatenings to warn, and Promises to comfort, are designed for the Use of innumerable Multitudes, in an infinite variety of Characters, Situations, and Circumstances; they do therefore as infallibly apply to these Characteristics, and to the Persons who bear them, as the Promises made to ABRAHAM, MOSES, JOSHUA, or JEPHTHAH, did to the Persons bearing those Names.

I think, SYNTYCHE, I have performed my Promise; and shewn that there is no more Reason to doubt the Will of God to do us good, than there is to doubt his Power: and that we have just the same Reason to believe the one as the other with Reference to ourselves. Our Business is to mark the Suitableness there is between the Words spoken, and our Circumstances, and to remember, that the Speaker is God, *the faithful God, who keepeth Covenant and Mercy for ever.* We will now, if you please, return to LITTLE-FAITH——

We were considering what FAINT-HEART, MISTRUST and GUILT took away

from him, and what they could not deprive him of. He lost his Comforts, which he used to live upon, and having but little Faith, went poor and sorrowful all his Days. It is a sad Thing for those who have *more* than a little Faith, to lose their Comforts; which they assuredly will if they transgress: they had best therefore watch and be sober; for though they may not much fear two of these Thieves, FAINT-HEART, and MISTRUST, they may find GUILT too hard for them.

Some Things, it seems, LITTLE-FAITH could not be deprived of, not owing to any Cunning of his, but to the Care of his Master: these were, his JEWELS and his CERTIFICATE. Blessed be GOD, that there are *some* Things a Believer shall not lose, but which are secured to him by an unchangeable Covenant, and that in Spite of Hell.

JEWELS, my dear SYNTYCHE, are very valuable Things: they are more so than Money; because a Few of them will cost a great deal of Money to purchase. They have an intrinsic Value, because they are scarce and rare. The Diamond, the Topaz, the Emerald, and the Jacinth, are not like the

the Stones of the Brook, or the Pebbles of the Highway: they are difficult to find, and Men labour hard, and dig deep into the Bowels of the Earth, to obtain a very Few of them.

Valuable in themselves, Jewels become more so by means of the beautiful Polish, and the curious Settings they receive from the Hand of the Workman, by which they become the Ornament and Pride even of Royalty itself. Because of the Scarcity and Excellence of Jewels, and the Value put upon them on that Account; the LORD says of those that fear him, and think on his Name; *they shall be mine in the Day when I make up my Jewels.*

THE RADICAL GRACES of the SPIRIT, which are his own Workmanship in the Saints, are the beautiful and shining JEWELS, which constitute their true Riches: as worn by them here, they indicate the high Birth and Royalty of the Wearer: but the Lustre and Beauty of them, is much tarnished by the Dust and Filth of Sin contracted in this Pilgrimage. When the Children of the King shall appear in full Dress at their Father's Court; all Dust and Filth shall be wiped from their JEWELS,

and they shall shine in all their Beauty and Glory.

Faith, Hope, Love, Humility, Meekness, Patience, Longsuffering, Compassion, and Mercy, are gracious Dispositions wrought in the Heart by the HOLY GHOST: they are the Believer's JEWELS, and it is his Duty to wipe and keep them clean, that their Beauty and Lustre may be apparent: as they constitute the heavenly Character, they are called Wisdom, and their Value is thus defined.

Wisdom is better than Rubies, and all the Things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx, or the Sapphire. It cannot be gotten for Gold, neither shall Silver be weighed for the Price thereof: the Gold and the Crystal, cannot equal it, and the Exchange of it shall not be for Jewels of fine Gold. No mention shall be made of Coral, or of Pearls, for the Price of Wisdom is above Rubies: the Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure Gold.

NOW LITTLE-FAITH lost not his JEWELS, nor his CERTIFICATE: what that was, we considered in a former Letter, when we were with CHRISTIAN at the Cross. Before we dismiss this Topic, let me recommend

mend to my Friend, an attentive Consideration of the Discourse between the Pilgrims, in Consequence of the Story of LITTLE-FAITH. It states the Difference between Grace and Nature, also between great Grace and little Faith: it describes the Difficulty and Danger of our Conflicts, the Duty of Humility, and Diffidence of our own Strength, and the Necessity of strong Faith. Over and above all; it teaches the Importance of that Prayer of MOSES; *If thy Presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.*

As there are true and faithful Shepherds, who are appointed by the King of Zion to conduct his Sheep in the right Way, so there are *cunning Men who lie in wait to deceive*, and who, taking Advantage of the unsuspecting Credulity of weak or inattentive Minds, do turn them out of the right Way. PAUL complaining of these, calls them, *false Apostles, deceitful Workers, Ministers of Satan transforming themselves into Ministers of CHRIST*. They deceive, by varnishing their Errors, with an Appearance or Likeness of Truth: or rather, the Doctrines they propose are so artfully stated, that they seem as productive of Holiness and Comfort, as those from which they

would allure us : they appear indeed to be different, but exactly tending to the same End. The Men themselves also, usually affect an Appearance of exceeding Piety, a Pretence to great Illumination and Zeal, and *speak great swelling Words of Vanity.*

It was near the DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS, that CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL, met with the FLATTERER. Wherever GOD has his Churches, the Devil will have Chapels near them. In this Metropolis, my dear Friend, where GOD has of late Years been raising many Temples, where the Doctrines of the Cross are preached ; many Synagogues of Satan have been opened, to promulgate another Gospel ; which like patent Medicines, and Manufactories, is puffed off with all the Pomposity of Language and Pretention. Never was the Caution of our Master more necessary than at present : *Take Heed what and how ye hear.*

- “ No Prophet, or Dreamer of Dreams,
- “ No Master of plausible Speech ;
- “ To live like an Angel who seems,
- “ Or like an Apostle to preach,
- “ Should meet with a Moment’s Regard,
- “ But rather be boldly withstood :
- “ If any Thing easy or hard
- “ He teach save the Lamb and his Blood.”

It

It often is the Case, that Teachers of false Doctrines are deceived themselves: and in that Case, *the Blind lead the Blind, till both fall into the Ditch*: but most commonly they are “Men black of Flesh,” that is, *Men of corrupt Minds, who speak perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them, having Mens Persons in admiration because of Advantage*: And sometimes they make a very pretty Living of their Trade.

Plausible as many false Doctrines seem to be, and as pious in their Tendency as the right Way; they gradually turn away from it to a directly contrary Tendency; for *evil Men and Seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*, and generally terminate, by making *Shipwreck of Faith and of a good Conscience*.

When a Child of GOD is seduced from the right Way, as CHRISTIAN and HOPEFUL were, their Minds become entangled and perplexed, and for want of that Union from the holy One, which used to teach them all Things, they find their Perplexities inextricable. *Doctrines which Cause to err from the Commandment*, can neither give Light nor Comfort to them; and their own Experience at length shews them,

that they are in an evil Case; but how to get out of it, and return to the right Way, is the Difficulty.

You knew ARTABANES, a lovely, lively, and affectionate Disciple. Curiosity led him to hear EUPHORBUS, and being young, ardent, and unsuspecting, he was deceived. EUPHORBUS had the *Tongue* and Powers of an *Angel*: he seemed to burn like a Seraph for the Glory of JESUS—for the Efficacy of his Blood to heal the Conscience—and for the Perfection of his Righteousness to justify and save. But under the Pretence of exalting a finished Salvation, he denied the sanctifying Work of the Spirit on the Heart, as derogatory to, and inconsistent with it.

ARTABANES swallowed the Bait: his ardent Zeal for the Honour of CHRIST JESUS in the Salvation of Sinners, induced him to swallow it. He forsook the Flock of EUODIAS, and associated with that of EUPHORBUS: promising himself abundantly more Peace and Comfort, and flattering himself with the Hope of less Trouble from Sin and Temptation, under the Power of such glorious Doctrines.

A little Time served to shew him the End to which the Tenets of EUPHORBUS led.

led. He saw in his Disciples, a light, trifling, and wanton Spirit: he felt the Malady creeping upon himself, and began to be alarmed: he was perplexed and knew not what to do; for though he had embraced Antinomian Principles with Fondness, he dreaded the Spirit and Practice of them: and he was equally afraid that if he verged toward his former Sentiments, his Mind would sink into Legality and Bondage.

Tired at last with what he saw, heard and felt, he looked back with Regret to the Way from which he had departed. A thousand Times did he wish himself again amongst his former Associates, but Guilt and Shame prevented his Return.

In this Case he lay long, like CHRISTIAN and his Companion in the Net: he became more and more convinced he had forsaken Truth for Error, and called himself a thousand Fools for so doing. To return to Sentiments was easy: but to return to the Life, Love and Power of those Sentiments, was not so easy: it was more than he could do. He did what he could; he *ceased to bear the Instruction which causeth to err from the Words of Knowledge*, and sought the LORD, *enquiring the Way to Zion, with his Face thitherward, with Weeping and Supplication.*

The

The Spirit of the LORD, whom he had grieved by his high-flown Pride of superior Gospel-Knowledge, was pleased to revisit him, with his kind Influences. The Heart of ARTABANES, was reanimated with Love to the Truth as it is in JESUS: he again experienced *Peace and Joy in believing*, and was again the Subject of *Hungerings and Thirstings after Righteousness*, and walked in Humility and Prayerfulness before the LORD.

His Brethren, whom he had grieved by his Departure from the Truth, saw his Return with Pleasure, and soon confirmed their Love towards him. Thus was ARTABANES restored as to outward Privileges, as well as inward Grace. But his Mind was long pained with deep Regrets for his Levity and wandering from the right Way: he was also exercised with sore Trouble in the Flesh, which he could not help but consider as a Rod of Chastisement for his Folly.

These Things ARTABANES himself related to me: I write them to my SYNTYCHE, as I think they are illustrative of this Part of the Allegory. I will close this Epistle with PAUL's Exhortation to us both, *Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions among you,*

you, and avoid them, for they serve not our LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their own Bellies, and by good Words, and fair Speeches deceive the Hearts of the Simple. Thine affectionately in the Truth of the Gospel,

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XXIII.

HOW various, my SYNTYCHE, and even opposite in Nature, are the Devices of Satan to destroy our Faith and Hope. Some he cheats out of their Religion by extraordinary religious Pretensions; thus in our last Letter we considered the Flatterers and their Wiles. In this we are to see him play another Game, and endeavour to laugh our Pilgrims out of their Faith in invisible Realities. Satan has an Army of Mockers, to scoff, taunt, jeer at, and deride the professed Followers of JESUS. He knows there are but very few that can bear the pointing of the Finger, or stand the Force of Ridicule, unless they have the Root of the Matter in them; and even then, he knows he shall vex and grieve them. DAVID's Heart was sore vexed, because *hypocritical Mockers gaped upon him with their Mouths.*

Their

There are two Sorts of Mockers at serious Godliness, both of them belong to the ATHEIST Family, who by their Works deny God, and are foolish enough to say in their Hearts, *There is no God*. The first Sort of these Mockers, are those prophane Wise-acres, who, though born and brought up in a Christian Land, know just as much of the Christian Religion as the Inhabitants of OTAHEITE: but who so forward as these, to crack their Jokes, and laugh at the Follies and Chimeras of the Saints?

These are formidable only to young Disciples: and where the Arrows of Conviction have only glanced, and have not deeply penetrated the Heart, they too often succeed, and laugh Religion out of Countenance. But older, and more established Persons, can treat such Mockers with Contempt, and despise their Ignorance. They hear unmoved, the Ridicule of Fools, and know that their *Laughter is like the crackling of Thorns under a Pot*.

The most Formidable and Vexatious, are those Scoffers who are Men of Parts, Learning and Wit, who give an Edge to their Satyr, by an Appearance of Reason and Argument. Of these there are some who

who have made a Profession of Religion, perhaps for Years, and from a natural Ardency of Temper, have been very zealous in the Ways of GOD: but as the Impressions of Truth were made only upon their Fancy, or Imagination, and not upon their Hearts; when these fail, their Religion fails also, and they conclude there is nothing in Religion, because they never felt the Power of it.

I call these formidable Enemies to Religion; because to Reasoning and Argument, they add the Plea of Experience. But blessed be GOD, real Christians have a Plea of Experience to oppose against it, they have *tasted that the LORD is gracious*, in repeated Instances, and know that they *have not followed cunningly devised Fables*, but Truths which have supported and carried them through a thousand Difficulties and Temptations. They have tried their GOD, by Faith and Prayer, and have found him faithful. Scoffers may prevail to make *Transgressors fall in the Ways of GOD*: but the *Righteous shall hold on his Way*, and be *that bath clean Hands shall grow stronger and stronger*.

Our Author has shewn himself a Master in Israel, by the Manner in which he conducts

ducts his Pilgrims over the ENCHANTED GROUND, without their receiving Damage from it. We will attend to his Description of this Country, and the Wisdom of his Pilgrims while they pass through it.

This Country he calls the ENCHANTED GROUND, because the "Air of it naturally tended to make one drowsy if he came a Stranger into it:" a short, but full Description of a State of Prosperity and Affluence: not such as a Person is born to, and never knew any other; but such as a Person is raised to by the Blessing of Providence.

Though God *calls not many*, yet he calls some that are *Rich, Noble, and Mighty*. These never knew the Streights of Poverty, or the Embarrassments that attend Persons of narrow, or casual Incomes. When called by divine Grace, they are taught to make a proper Estimate of their worldly Good, so as to prevent its becoming a Snare to them in future. Their Dangers and Temptations therefore, arise from other Quarters.

Not so, those Children of God, who were born in Meanness, or at most Mediocrity of Fortune, and called of God in that State: perhaps continued Years in it, struggling

gling with Difficulties, and some Times groaning under Distresses and Calamities: when these, by a Blessing of God upon their Industry and Trade, or some Turn of Providence in their Favour, become rich, they enter into a new State, and come Strangers into worldly Prosperity.

Their Minds are now delivered from those Cares, Fears, and Exercises, which used to keep them awake to a Sense of Dependance upon God for the Bread of this World. No more Acts of Faith, nor agonizing in Prayer, for the Supplies of the Morrow, for satisfying the Demands of the Creditor, and for *providing honest Things in the Sight of all Men. The Barn Floor and the Wine Press yield their Supplies. The good Providence of God spreads their Table and their Cup runneth over.*

When all Things go thus easy, smooth, and well, Persons unaccustomed to such Rest and Peace, are prone to grow spiritually Drowsy, to sink into dull Formality, or to take up with, and solace themselves with the Comforts of this World. The less they have been accustomed to Things of this Sort, the greater is their Danger of falling into a lethargic State, concerning their Souls.

Souls. Pride, self Complacency, worldly Consequence and Importance; the Smiles, the Fawnings, the Complacency of those who despised them when poor, and *would have scorned to have set them with the Dogs of their Flocks*; all these have such an intoxicating Influence on the Mind, that some Professors have lost their Religion soon after they lost their Poverty; and others have preserved only an Image of it, like a Man asleep, who is little more than the Image of a Man. Hence the many Calls, Warnings, Exhortations, and even Threatenings, addressed to Sleepers, or those in Danger of becoming so, *to those that are at ease in Zion*. Trouble keeps the Mind awake, but Ease lulls to sleep and repose.

Take Heed, my SYNTYCHE, of this ENCHANTED-GROUND, and forgive the affectionate Officiousness of a Friend, who would warn you against sleeping, *lest you sleep the Sleep of Death*. You are not yet so puffed up with Pride, from your new Acquisitions, as to be offended at Christian Remonstrance; but will, I hope, *suffer the Word of Exhortation*. You was lately poor, afflicted, and in Trouble, like your ANDRONICUS; till the Removal of a Relative, put you into Possession

sion of a Fortune far beyond your Expectation. From the Greatness of the Change, and from the Suddenness of it, arises your Danger. Where the Rise is more gradual, the Danger is so likewise.

Your Friend is perhaps in Danger by writing thus, of being thought envious at your Good, and invidiously treating it as a Calamity, from mere Chagrine, because he can come at nothing like it: that such Things are, I will not deny, but God forbid they should dwell in the Breast of ANDRONICUS. I rejoice, my SYNTYCHE, I sincerely rejoice in the Good the LORD has done you. I consider Wealth in itself a Blessing, it is through the Corruption of our Nature that it becomes a Snare, and I warn you, lest it become a Snare to you. If the LORD by his Grace, keep you awake and lively, I rejoice to think, what *Fruits of Righteousness*, such a Fortune may produce. *The Poor will not be withheld from his Desire, nor the Eyes of the Widow made to fail: thy Morsel will not be eaten alone, but the Fatherless shall partake thereof: neither shall any perish for want of Cloathing, nor the Poor be without Covering, their Loins shall bless thee, when they are warmed with the Fleece of thy Sheep.* This

This, my SYNTYCHE, is possessing Riches as a Blessing; and as a Means of *laying up Treasure in Heaven*: It is thus I wish my Friend to possess them. Hear an Apostle on the Subject. *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living GOD, who giveth us richly all Things to enjoy: That they do Good—that they be rich in good Works—ready to distribute—willing to communicate—laying up in Store for themselves, a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they lay hold on eternal Life.*

Having considered the soporific Nature and Tendency of worldly Prosperity, let me recommend to you the Wisdom and Prudence of the Pilgrims in guarding against the Infection. That you may do so, seek and prize the Company of lively Christians, and let the Pilgrims furnish you with Topics of Conversation.

Their first Topic is Experience. HOPEFUL relates the Dealings of God with his Soul, in a sweet and simple Manner: while CHRISTIAN'S pertinent Questions draw from him an honest Confession of his Endeavours to get rid of his Convictions, and

and the Struggles of his Heart against the Spirit of God : also a precious Detail of the Progress of the Work, as the LORD beat him off from every false Refuge, and brought him at last, as a poor, lost, and ruined Creature, to JESUS CHRIST for a whole Salvation.

Such Conversation has a blessed Tendency to keep the Heart awake, and enliven the Affections. The Recollection of what the LORD has done for us, and in us, recalls to Memory our native Poverty, and Misery ; and our infinite Obligations to free Grace, keeps us little in our own Eyes, and dependent upon the LORD ; and from Similarity of Experience, leads the Hearts of Believers into an affectionate Attachment to each other.

When I speak of Similarity of Experience, I do not mean a Similarity of Manner : the LORD's Dealings with his Children are various, but all lead to the same End : some are shaken with Terror, while others are more gently drawn as with *Cords of Love*. In these Things Believers should not expect a Similarity, nor make their Experiences Standards for one another. But the Similarity I mean is, their being brought to the same Point of rejecting both sinful
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and righteous Self, and believing on the LORD JESUS CHRIST as their complete Salvation. Believers thus, see and feel, and know one another in the Spirit of the Gospel, and mutually rejoice in their Joint-Participation in the same LORD, through the same most holy Faith. Partakers of like most precious Faith, and Partners of the same immortal Hopes, they are endeared to each other, as Persons whose Interests are united.

Their second Topic of Conversation is of the Soul-searching and awakening kind. Having been comforted with the Evidences of the Truth of Grace in themselves, they feel a friendly Concern for IGNORANCE; and endeavour, with all Fidelity, to point out the Deceptions of his miserably blinded Heart; to lead him into a Knowledge of his dangerous Condition, through the Rottenness of his Faith and Hope; and instruct him how to *fly from the Wrath to come.*

Amiable Charity and tenderest Kindness, to endeavour to *save a Soul from Death!* an Employment, which though it should fail of Success, meets its own Reward in the Performance, by keeping us awake to our
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own eternal Interests: and if we succeed, what glorious Consequences! *He that converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.* A proper Concern for, and suitable Endeavours after the Salvation of the Self-Deceivers, is a noble Enterprize: but it requires much Wisdom of Mind, Honesty of Heart, and Patience of Spirit, *to instruct those in Meekness who oppose themselves: if God, peradventure, will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his Will.*

We have, my dear SYNTYCHE, a third Source of Help against spiritual Drowfiness, in the PILGRIM'S Discourse about true Convictions, and the right Fear of the LORD. May our gracious God put abundantly of that *Fear into our Hearts, that we may not depart from him.* It is said *Blessed is the Man that feareth always,* and to fear the LORD, is one of the Scripture Marks of true Religion: one of the Characteristics of the Children of God. Mark well CHRISTIAN'S Definition of it: it is one of

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those precious Passages, in which our Author gives us the Subject Matter of a whole Treatise, in a few short and plain Sentences : treasure it up in your Heart, and often ponder it there ; it will prove, through the Blessing of the SPIRIT, a special Means of enlivening, when spiritual Languor, in Consequence of worldly Ease, is creeping upon your Soul.

PAUL says of ISRAEL in his Day, *I bear them Record that they have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge : for they, being ignorant of GOD's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the Righteousness of GOD.* Self-Righteousness then is founded in Ignorance, and supported by it.

I think with CHRISTIAN ; nay, I may say with HOPEFUL, that I know something of it by Experience, that such Persons have Convictions of Sin, and Fears that their State is not good : but not understanding that such Convictions tend to their Good, they do desperately seek to stifle them, and presumptuously continue to flatter themselves in the Way of their own Hearts.

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Now, mark how they stifle them. They think that those Fears are wrought by the Devil, and resist them as Temptations that tend to their Overthrow ; they therefore set themselves against them as Enemies to their Peace of Conscience, and to their religious Attainments.

They suppose also, that those Fears tend to the spoiling of their Faith ; for such they imagine their vain Presumption to be : therefore they harden their Hearts against them. They have a Notion, that Unbelief is a Sin ; and ignorantly consider all Doubts and Fears concerning the Goodness of their State, as that Sin. They suppose that to be confident that all is right, is to be strong in Faith : their Confidence must therefore be supported at any Rate.

They presume that they ought not to fear ; that it is inconsistent with Love to God, to be afraid of his Terror. And this they presume, because it is written, *There is no Fear in Love ; but perfect Love casteth out Fear, because Fear bath Torment : He that feareth is not made perfect in Love.* Their Pride and Self-Conceit, will not let them perceive, that the Fear mentioned in this Passage is not the Fear of God's Displea-

sure ; for this Fear is consistent with strong Affection : neither is it the Fear that we may be in a State of Danger, for this also may well consist with true Love to God, and without it, Self-Examination is vain and foolish : but that selfish, carnal, worldly Fear, of suffering Loss or Damage for God's Sake, which Fear, torments the Heart between the CROSS and the CROWN.

Lastly, they see that those Fears tend to take away from them, " their pitiful old Self-Holiness," to strip them of those Advantages they imagine they possess above others. They know not what it is to count their *Gain, Loss for CHRIST*, nor are they willing to *suffer the Loss of all Things, that they may win him, and be found in him, not having their own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of CHRIST: the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* They therefore resist these Fears with all their Might, and presumptuously persevere, till like IGNORANCE, they meet with Rejection where they expect Acceptance.

I intended, SYNTYCHE, with the close of this Letter, to have seen our Pilgrims off the ENCHANTED-GROUND ; but their Conversation has been so interesting, that
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our Attention to them has drawn out this Letter to a considerable Length : we will close with the best Wishes for SYNTYCHE, that can be conceived by the Heart of

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XXIV.

WE will again salute our holy Pilgrims, and join their Company, that we may benefit by their edifying Conversation. They are taking up a new Subject, equally interesting and important with the Former, and like the Former, calculated to keep them awake on the ENCHANTED-GROUND. It is concerning one TEMPORARY, who though his Beginning was much more like the Truth of Things, than that of IGNORANCE : yet was his Profession of a much shorter Date : he was, as we say, soon hot, and soon cold : because with all his fair Seeming, he was graceless, dishonest, and a Lover of himself.

It is, my dear SYNTYCHE, in Religion, as it is in the natural World ; there are

many promising Appearances which come to nothing. When I last visited you it was the Spring of the Year, when the Fruit-Trees put forth their lovely Blossoms, and when Men form their Expectations of the Profits of Autumn.—You remember that beautiful Tree, near the Orchard-Gate, how covered with Bloom, and charming to the Eye! We both predicted an amazing Crop. My visit was but short, yet before I left you, scarce a Blossom remained on the Tree: all its Beauty was scattered on the Ground, and our Prediction proved to be the Judgment of erring Mortals.

So have I seen it in the Church of God: the Ministry of the Word, as appeared to be attended with an awakening and convincing Power. Numbers have cried out, *What shall we do to be saved?* There appeared to be a serious solemn Concern about Salvation: a Reformation of Life and Manners, which excited the Wonder of the World: and an apparent Zeal, for the Things of God. Joyful Expectation has filled our Hearts, and we cried, in the Words of our Master, *Behold, lift up your Eyes, and look upon the Fields, for they are white already to Harvest.*

Alas!

Alas ! what awful Disappointments have we met with ! What Numbers have turned back into the World ! Some of them plunged into Filth and Pollution they were unacquainted with before Profession : and others have become Deriders and Persecutors of those to whom they have wept, and with whom they have prayed. Grief has filled our Hearts, and Shame has covered our Faces, because our Enemies exulted and said, *Aha, aba, so we would have it.*

To enquire into the Reasons of such sudden Backslidings, and also into the Manner of it, may be very profitable : for these Things I refer you to our Pilgrims. HOPEFUL shall state to you the Former, and CHRISTIAN the Latter : and when you have heard them out, I will tell you a true Tale.

A certain religious Society in the Country, had settled down upon the Lees of dull Formality, and was becoming even careless and indifferent about the Doctrines of the Gospel ; when it pleased God to visit them with a Revival of the Spirit, and Power of Religion among them. The History of that Revival is not essential to my Tale : suffice it to say, That Professors of long standing, saw, and partook of the Blessing.

Blessing, and rejoiced that many young Converts were added to their Society.

Amongst these was HILARIO, a young Man of warm Passions, and of forward Dispositions : he had been gay, dissipated, and devoted to his Pleasures and Gratifications. A good Education, good Sense, and good Temper, rendered him so agreeable ; that his Company was sought by many. This HILARIO, I say, was among those whom the Word seemed to reach with Power : he was much awakened to a Sense of Danger, and set out boldly in a Profession of Religion, regardless of the Opinions of Men concerning his Conduct. He thought his Soul at Stake, and HILARIO could not be indifferent about any Matter, much less in one of such Magnitude and Importance.

His Attendance on public Worship, was constant and with Affection, not only on the stated Opportunities of the Sabbath, but on occasional Lectures on Week-Days. Whenever the People assembled, HILARIO was there : nothing but Affairs of the utmost Consequence could hinder him, and he seemed to hear the Word, as one who heard for his Life ; his Tears often indicating the Effect it had upon his Mind.

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He attended constantly, those select Parties which met from House to House for Prayer and religious Conversation. He frequently visited the godly at their Houses, to converse with them on the Doctrines of the Gospel, their Influence on the Heart, and their Application to Practice. He devoted his Labour, and was generous of his Substance, for the Service of Religion and the Relief of the Poor; and though a Person of some Consideration in the Town where he dwelt, he visited the Houses of the meanest Persons, if religious, to talk with them about JESUS CHRIST. He also devoted a Portion of Time every Day, for reading the Scripture, Prayer, and Meditation, in his own Apartment.

You will naturally suppose, my SYNTYCHE, that HILARIO was much beloved and esteemed by those who had the Cause of GOD at Heart, and great Expectations formed of his growing and continued Usefulness: the Appearance was indeed lovely and promising, but ah, how short lived these Prospects! a few Months brought on an awful Change in the Appearance of HILARIO; and destroyed all those pleasing Hopes that had been formed concerning him.

A general Election was approaching, and Parties ran high and violent. The ardent HILARIO plunged into this Scene of Confusion with all his Soul, and though often warned of his Danger, was so confident that he was doing his Duty in serving his Country, and promoting the Interest of his Friends, that he either saw not, or would not see his Danger. The Consequences were soon visible: his Concern for his Soul, and his Zeal for Godliness, were lost in the Uproar and Disorder of the Times.

His Manner of going back was exactly as CHRISTIAN describes such Persons. The Care, Eagerness, and Hurry which engrossed him about this Election, drew off his Thoughts from the Remembrance of God, of Death, and of a future Judgment: his Retirements, of Consequence, grew first insipid, and then irksome. He no longer sought the Conversation of warm and lively Christians, for spiritual Converse; all his Talk was now about the Affairs of the Party. He absented himself from religious Meetings, under Pretence of these important Matters taking up his Time, and was seldom to be seen in any Worship of God, except on the LORD's Day.

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When the Hurry of these Scenes was over, HILARIO was pressed to return to his former Fellowship with his Christian Friends. Alas! his Disposition for it was spoiled: he could no longer bear the artless, simple, unstudied Prayers of the Men in whose Devotions he had before professed to find Pleasure. One was too long and tiresome, another used vain Repetitions, another talked Nonsense, and there was a Similarity, Tautology, and want of Variety in them all. He considered it therefore as loss of Time to attend those Meetings, unless the Minister went through the whole of the Devotions.

HILARIO now principally associated with the Connections he had formed during the Election, and indulged in their prophane and obscene Conversation. He still attended the public Worship of the LORD'S Day; but instead of the Tear trickling down his Check, HILARIO slept, or behaved irreverently, to the Grief and Offence of the Congregation.

He became impatient of Reproof, and pettish at Remonstrance: he watched with Eagles Eyes the Professors around him, marking every Infirmary of Temper, and

Inadvertency of Conduct: no Fault could take Place in the Society, but the Pastor was sure to hear of it from HILARIO, as a Sort of Justification of himself by Way of Comparison with others. Often he would charge the Pastor with making personal Reflections from the Pulpit: though the Truth was, that it was impossible for him to speak against Sin, without touching HILARIO in one fore Place or other.

HILARIO however soon found a Remedy for that Inconvenience, by persuading himself into a Disbelief of the Scriptures as divine Records; and by forming to himself an imaginary God, who was very indulgent to the Passions and Propensities of his Creatures; especially if they were not unjust, oppressive, and malignant. To do HILARIO Justice, he was a Man of Probity, Generosity, and Compassion: Virtues of which he was not a little sensible, nor a little proud: reckoning much upon them, as recommendatory to the Favour and Indulgence of his God.

In one Thing, HILARIO was different from most Apostates: for though he threw off every Yoke of Religion, he did not wholly absent himself from public Worship,
nor

nor withdraw his pecuniary Support of it. He professed to do it from Principles of Generosity, and for the Benefit of those who considered Religion as a Matter of Importance. How far this was really the Case, will appear another Day; or whether a Number of his professing Neighbours being Burgeesses, might not be a powerful Motive.

HILARIO is now no more. After near twenty Years Continuance in his Backslidings, a severe Fever cut off his Days almost suddenly. He died regretted for his good Qualities, and lamented as an Apostate, for he was one, who had he held on as he began, would have been an Honour and a Comfort, to the Church of God.

I have finished my Tale, and shall only add, that such frequent and awful Examples of Backsliding, should excite a holy Jealousy over ourselves and others: *let us watch and be sober*, and never forget that it is *he who endures to the End, that shall be saved*.

Our Pilgrims have passed over the ENCHANTED-GROUND, without taking one single Nap. HOPEFUL, indeed, was drowsy; but a faithful Companion kept him from sleeping: and by well-ordered, and Soul-searching

searching Conversation, they kept each other awake till past the Danger, manifesting the Truth of CHRISTIAN's Song.

" Saints Fellowship, if it be manag'd well,
" Keeps them awake, and that in Spite of Hell."

Thus may SYNTYCHE escape the Enchantments of a smiling World. Alas ! how few escape them wholly !

Join with me, my Friend, in this Request to the Spirit of Life and Power, with which this Epistle shall close.

" Now thy quick'ning Influence bring,
" On our Souls divinely move,
" Open wide our Hearts to sing
" Jesu's everlasting Love.
" Take the Things of CHRIST, and shew,
" What his Love for us has done ;
" Thus may we the FATHER know,
" Through his well-beloved SON.
" Lighten each benighted Heart,
" Drive our Enemies away :
" Joy, and Love, and Peace impart,
" Lead us in the heavenly Way.
" Nothing then our Hearts shall fear,
" While we urge our Way to Heaven ;
" While we feel thy Presence near,
" Witnessing our Sins forgiven."

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXV.

THOU *hast kept the good Wine until now,* was the Praise given to the Governor of the Feast at the Marriage in CANA : but he deserved it not. A Head more wise, a Heart more provident and beneficent, ordained that the Blessings of the Feast should not diminish, but increase, with its Continuance. It is his Plan of Conduct toward those he loves, to turn their Water into Wine : to reserve their best Blessings till the last ; and to give them most of Heaven, when Earth can do least for them. His holy Pilgrims find the Land of BEULAH, near the End of their Pilgrimage, and in Sight of the City of their eternal Rest.

But let it be remembered, that this Blessing is not the Lot of all his Saints. The Enjoyment of this delightful Country is denied to some ; and their Felicity reserved entirely for another World : except that *Joy of Hope*, that small Foretaste, which results from their Faith, being *the Substance*

of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen: a Joy always proportioned to the Strength or Weakness of Faith.

Our Author, my dear SYNTYCHE, seems to involve a double Meaning in his Metaphor of the Country of BEULAH: at least so it seems to me, by comparing the second Part of his PILGRIM with this, and also by comparing his descriptive Imagery with those Places of Scripture from which it is borrowed. The first of these Meanings, is that glorious State of Things promised to the Church in the latter Days, which will be the first Fruits and Earnest of ZION's everlasting Glory: and which will but a little precede it. The second is, those rapturous Emanations of his Grace and Love, which have been experienced by some Believers, in the last and closing Scenes of Life.

Both the Name and Description of this delightful Country, is taken from the Prophecy of ISAIAH and the SONG OF SOLOMON: especially the Former, in which the Prophet celebrates the Glory of the latter Day, and with great Earnestness prays for it. The Words of the Prophecy are, *Thou shalt be called HEPHZIBAH, and thy Land BEULAH, for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy Land shall*

shall be married, and as the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. The LORD hath sworn by his Right-Hand, and by the Arm of his Strength: surely, I will no more give thy Corn to be Meat for thine Enemies, and the Sons of the Stranger shall not drink thy Wine for which thou hast laboured: but they that have gathered it, and praise the LORD. And they that have brought it together, shall drink it in the Courts of my Holiness. Say ye to the Daughter of Zion, Behold! thy Salvation cometh: behold his Reward is with him, and his Work before: and they shall call them the Holy City, the Redeemed of the LORD, sought out, and not forsaken.

The Rest of the Description of this Country is taken from that beautiful Eclogue, the SONG OF SOLOMON, where all that is gratifying to the Senses, and even enchanting in a rural Scene, is painted in Nature's simplest, strongest Colours. An ever-shining Sun, and flowery Spring, the Melody of Birds, and the Voice of the Turtle.

Without pretending to Infallibility and Perfection, in interpreting Prophecy; which is the highest Presumption, and
greatest

greatest Arrogance; let us endeavour, my dear Friend, to gather from those beautiful Metaphors a few Things, in which we cannot be much mistaken, while we keep in our Eye, the Perfection of those Things we now imperfectly enjoy, as the Blessing which is there promised.

And certainly, SYNTYCHE, we must conclude the Metaphors describe, the Triumph of Divine Truth over all human Errors: a Ministration of the Gospel attended with amazing Power and Success: Ordinances of Worship filled with Glory, and the Presence of the LORD: and Churches, like Orchards, Vineyards, and Gardens, replenished with Fruits and Flowers, adorned with all the *Beauties of Holiness*, and abounding in the *Fruits of Righteousness*. We must also conceive, that Believers, in such a State of Things as this, shall be far removed from Darkness, Temptation, and Doubt.—Shall be filled with the Spirit in Knowledge, Liveliness, and Affection; and shall dwell on the Confines of Heaven, waiting with Desire, to be for ever there.

We know not how long the Church has yet to wait for this Glory to be revealed: but something of the experimental Part of it,

it, by Way of Earnest, has been anticipated by many Saints, and more particularly, when near their Journey's End. Their Eyes saw not, indeed, the Glory of God upon Israel, but they felt it resting upon their own Souls. *The full Assurances of Faith and Hope* banished every Doubt and Fear; while *the Love of God shed abroad in the Heart*, disarmed Death of all Terror, and made them long to depart, and be with JESUS.

How has divine Consolations, like the *Wine that goeth down so sweetly, as to cause the Lips of them that are asleep to speak*; awakened every Power to praise the LORD, and edify and comfort surrounding Friends? How have these Consolations, even under excruciating Pangs and Tortures from Diseases, supported with more than Patience, the afflicted Saints, who have declared their Joys were more, and greater than their Pains?

Such Blessings, my dear SYNTYCHE, I have already observed, are not the Lot of every Saint. They are no where promised to be so; yet have they often been granted; and why not again? Why may not SYNTYCHE and his Friend pray, that as they approach their Journey's End, they may be favoured with a Sight of the City, and
a Sense

a Sense of its Glory? yet should our Request be denied, let us not be dejected, our Heaven will be never a Whit less sweet because we wait for it, till we pass over JORDAN. Be it our chief Concern that Faith may hold out to the End, and *Patience have its perfect Work.* That we may bear a living and a dying Testimony to the Faithfulness of GOD, though we cannot talk of rapturous Enjoyments.

I believe also that we may justly remark further, that strong Consolations, sensible Experiences of the divine Presence to a high Degree, a full Assurance arising from what is felt, as well as what is believed, are Blessings that have mostly abounded in a Time of Suffering and Persecution, because where the Cross lays heavy without, and Consolations of a worldly Nature are cut off on CHRIST'S Account, and for his Sake; his Mercy and Goodness wonderfully appears in bestowing better, and higher Enjoyments. But when Trials are less severe, He makes a Difference; for the Tenor of the Promise is, *As thy Day is, so shall thy Strength be.*

I have also remarked, that many of the LORD'S trembling Ones, who have lived and walked almost all their Days in Fearfulness

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of falling short at last, and have never been able to acquire sufficient Strength of Faith to face Death ; have, as that event approached, been favoured with sensible Manifestations of GOD's Presence with them, which have done away all their Fears of Death, before that awful Event came upon them. Their gracious Master in Compassion to their Weakness, *has gathered them with his Arm, and carried them in his Bosom.*

Our Author observes, that in this Land of BEULAH, the shining Ones commonly walked, because it was upon the Borders of Heaven. It has been the Opinion of several who have wrote, or preached on the Glory of the Church in the latter Day, that the Angels of GOD will visit, and converse with the Saints on Earth, as a Beginning of that Fellowship which shall subsist between Saints and Angels for ever in Heaven. That Angels have appeared to Men, and conversed with them, we are well assured, because our Bibles tell us so, but how far this is the Case now, or will be so in future, appears to me to be problematical.

Will SYNTYCHE ask me, Why not now as well as formerly? I reply, Angels appeared formerly to Men, and conversed
with

with them, as Messengers sent of God, to deliver some important Message relative to, and connected with the Affairs of the MESSIAH. The Converse of Angels with Men, no where in Scripture bears the Marks of private Visits to particular Persons, or of open familiar Conversation with Men at large: they came to denounce Threatenings, execute Vengeance, declare Events that had taken Place, or foretell such as were to come to pass almost immediately, or in more distant Periods of Time. But when the Book of Prophecy closed, then also seemed to cease all visible Ministry of Angels, till the appointed Day, when they shall attend their great Master and ours, in the Clouds of Heaven.

Thus runs the solemn Declaration. *I JESUS, have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these Things in the Churches, I testify unto every Man that heareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book; if any Man shall ADD unto these Things, GOD shall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book. And if any Man shall take away from the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, GOD shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City: and from the Things which are written*

written in this Book. After this Declaration, I am obliged to consider the visible Ministry of Angels as suspended until that Day, when they shall come forth, commissioned by the SAVIOUR, to gather his Elect from the four Winds. I am obliged also to consider all that has been said of the Appearance of Angels to good Men, as only visionary at best; and as tending to draw off the Mind from *that sure Word of Testimony*, to which we do well to take Heed.

Many good People have believed in the Appearance of Angels to Believers, before, and at their Death. Our Author has according to this Notion, set before us two of them, accompanying and conversing with his Pilgrims, as they advanced towards the holy City: asking them Questions concerning their past Journey, and foretelling what Difficulties they had yet to meet with; but what is there in the New Testament like it?

Do not suppose, my SYNTYCHE, that while I consider angelic Apparitions as merely visionary, that I also consider the Ministrations of Angels as fabulous. Far from it. The Word of Truth has said,
They are ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister

nister unto them who shall be Heirs of Salvation. They are the Servants of our LORD, appointed to attend us. I have no Doubt of their frequent, perhaps constant Presence with us; but the peculiar Nature of their Ministrations, is, I believe as little known to us, as the Nature of Angels themselves, and will remain so through the present State of Things. Let us then be thankful to our SAVIOUR for their Services, and not be too prying into hidden Things. *That voluntary Humility, and worshipping of Angels, which is reproved in the Word, arose from Men, intruding into those Things which they had not seen, vainly puffed up in their fleshly Mind.*

The Metaphor of the River is beautiful, you know its Antitype is JORDAN, a River which separated the Land of Canaan from the Countries eastward of it. A River without a Bridge, which therefore could only be passed at its Fords; and must be passed by all Persons who would enter Canaan that way. Moreover at certain Seasons of the Year, JORDAN overflowed all its Banks. Through this River the Tribes of Israel passed to the promised Land.

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The Christian Church has, generally considered JORDAN as a Type of Death, because none of the Redeemed, except ENOCH and ELIJAH, have gone to the heavenly Canaan by any other Way : nor shall any, till the last Trumpet shall sound : then indeed, those *which are alive, shall not die, but shall all be changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye*, to the same incorruptible State with those that are raised from the Dead.

Even those few Persons, who have doubted whether we have sufficient Scripture Authority to say, that the River JORDAN is a Type of Death ; do all agree, that it is the fittest, and most apt Allusion of that Event. Not only because it was the Entrance of Israel to their promised Inheritance ; but because, the ebbing and flowing of this River, rendered its Passages or Fords, either safe and easy, or difficult and dangerous : and more particularly, because the sensible Presence of the LORD, or the Exercise of strong Faith in his Power and Grace, removed all Difficulty of Passage. Even so the same happy Circumstances remove all the Difficulty of dying.

In the first Case: the ARK of the COVENANT, which was the Emblem, and Evidence of the LORD's sensible Presence, rested in the Midst of JORDAN, while the Armies of Israel passed over. Well might they go through the River without Fear or Danger; GOD was in the Midst of it, and forbad its Waters to overflow them. When the Question is asked, *What ailed thee, O Jordan, that thou wast driven back?* the Answer is, *At the Presence of the LORD: at the Presence of the GOD of Jacob.* Even so does the sensible Presence of CHRIST, render dying safe and easy to the departing Saint.

The second Case, namely, that of strong Faith, is exemplified by the MANTLE of ELIJAH. That sacred Veil which the Prophet wrapped around his Head, when he worshipped the LORD in Horeb the Mount of GOD; he took at the Passage of JORDAN, and having wrapped it together, he smote the Waters with it, and they divided hither, and thither, while he and ELISHA passed over. When he ascended in the Chariot of Fire, he dropped this MANTLE to his Successor, as the Pledge and Proof, that the same Spirit and Power remained upon him. *ELISHA took up the Mantle*

Mantle that fell from him, and went back and stood by the Bank of Jordan, and he took the Mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the Waters, and said, in the Power of Faith, WHERE IS THE LORD GOD OF ELIJAH? And when he had smitten the Waters, they were parted hither and thither, and Elisba went over.

Faith in the living JESUS, will render the Departure of a dying Saint composed and easy, though no peculiar Tokens of the Divine Presence be with him. This will be more or less the Case, in proportion to the Strength or Weakness of Faith. When the Pilgrims asked the SHINING ONES, if the Water was all of a Depth? They said, "No; for you shall find it deeper or shallower, as you believe in the King of the Place."

CLIO had walked before God many Years, with much Humility and Tenderness of Conscience, yet was *all her Life long in Bondage, through the Fear of Death*. But when the dreaded Event approached, CLIO said to URIJAH who visited her, "Sir, all my Fear of Death is vanished." "Happy Disappointment," replied URIJAH, "I came expecting to find you overwhelmed

with Doubts and Fears: I came therefore to endeavour to comfort and encourage you. I rejoice, that instead of the Labour which I feared, I have to give Thanks to God for his great Mercy, in *lifting up the Light of his Countenance upon you*, in this most important Season."

"Indeed Sir," said CLIO, "I do not feel those Comforts, of which I have heard others speak: I do not experience half the Happiness I have sometimes felt, when under the Word, or when approaching to the Throne of Grace: but, *I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that Day.*" CLIO continued calm and serene to her last Moment, when feebly articulating, "O he is God, the faithful God," she went to praise him.

It is Time to put an End to this Letter: in my next we will attend our Pilgrims to their Journey's End. Oh! my SYNTYCHE, if we sleep in Dust, as is most probable, before the LORD shall call his Church BEU-LAH; and should he not grant us those Experiences, which are an Earnest of that State, and indicate our being on the Borders of Heaven; I trust he will permit us
to

to die like CLIO, bearing our Testimony to his Truth and Faithfulness. That our *End may be that of the Righteous, even Peace*; is the Prayer of

ANDRONICUS.

LETTER XXVI.

ROCK of eternal Ages! we rejoice in thy Immutability: Thou art God, and changeest not, therefore we are not consumed: 'tis well for us that our Safety does not depend upon our Frames, but on thy unchanging Love and Mercy. See, my SYNTYCHE, the Men who a little while ago, were looking with longing Eyes toward the City, and fainting with Desire to be there. Who cried out in their Pangs, *If you see my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of Love.* Behold these very Men, trembling and shivering on the Banks of that River, which was the only Thing that separated them, from him whom their Souls loved. With what Anxiety they look this Way, and that Way, to escape the River.

“ Sweet Fields beyond the swelling Flood,

“ Stand dress’d in living Green :

“ So to the Jews old Canaan stood,

“ While Jordan roll’d between.

“ But tim’rous Mortals start and shrink,

“ To cross this narrow Sea :

“ They linger, shivering on the Brink,

“ And fear to launch away.”

Nothing, however great and sublime, is permanent, but that which has the Seal of Eternity upon it. It has often so been, that those who have had the highest Enjoyments of God in the Days of their Pilgrimage, who have looked forward to Death with dauntless Courage, and even pressed toward it with Desire ; these have, like our Pilgrims, been put to a Stand, when the Master said, *Come up hither.*

The dear EUODIAS had made this Remark on many a Fellow Pilgrim, who pass’d over Jordan before him. He was a Man highly favoured of the LORD, as to his Experience ; but what he had so often seen happen to others, made him jealous, lest his coward Heart should play him Booty, and shrink with Fear, at the Prospect of Dissolution. Often have I heard him confess it, that his Fears were, lest his last Trials should be his greatest.

His

His earnest Wish therefore was, that he might be snatched away without a Moment's Warning, and expire, preaching the Word of Life to his fellow Sinners. EUODIAS could not join in that Petition of the Liturgy, "From sudden Death, good LORD deliver us." How far EUODIAS was right, I know not; one Thing is certain, he had his Wish in Part, and expired suddenly, on a LORD'S Day Morning, while Thousands were assembling to hear him preach.

The Remark I wish to make is this, that those who walk in the Light of GOD'S Countenance, would do well to recollect, that a cloudy Death may finish their Course: even as we have often seen in the natural World, the brightest Sun of a Summer's Day, go down involved in Clouds, dark and tempestuous. Let not the Idea terrify, as it did EUODIAS, but let it prepare the Mind for such a Season, if it be the Master's Will, and lead to a Recollection of HOPEFUL'S Exhortation to CHRISTIAN: "These Troubles and Distresses," says he, "which you go through in these Waters, are no Sign that GOD hath forsaken you; but are sent to try you, whether you will call to Mind that which you have hereto-

fore received of his Goodness, and live upon him in your Distresses."

But it is Time to return to our Pilgrims: they enter the River, but O! how different their Experience in passing through it! HOPEFUL, like CLIO, found his Soul supported above Fear. "I feel," said he, "the Bottom, and it is good." And afterwards, "I see the Gate, and the Men standing to receive us." Not a Temptation ruffled his Breast: nothing to struggle with but dissolving Nature. Dear gracious Master, if thy Servant may speak his Wish before thee, let me die like HOPEFUL; pity my Weaknesses and Fears of the last Moments: Oh! let the many dreadful Conflicts I have met with suffice, and grant me a peaceful Dismission from this Warfare!

Be silent, my Soul, before the LORD: thou mayest not chuse thy Lot: nor hast thou any right to ask this Indulgence. Thou hast acquitted thyself too badly in the Conflicts thou complainest of, to claim Indulgence here. Alas! how canst thou say, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith?* Thy Conscience tells thee, that thy Cowardice and Unfaithfulness, have given thine Enemies Ad-

Advantage over thee. Look on such a Character as that of CHRISTIAN, and be silent.

Poor CHRISTIAN ! He no sooner enters the River, but he begins to sink. " I sink," he cries, " in deep Waters—the Billows go over my Head—all his Waves go over me ! " Darknefs and Horror fell upon him, and dreadful Temptations from the Enemy beset him, till he concluded he should die in the River, and never obtain Entrance in at the Gate.

The Idea of perishing, is dreadful to the Wretch, who has courted and pursued Damnation all his Days, if he be awakened on a dying Bed : but he knows not yet the Agony of losing Heaven, because he never fought it ; nor loved it. Not so the Believer, Destruction is indeed a Terror to him ; but his greatest Agony, is the Thought of being disappointed of all those Hopes which have warmed his Heart. To be cast out from the Presence of God : To be denied the Vision of that Holy One, in whose Name he has rejoiced ; To be excluded that blessed Society he had hoped to be numbered with for ever ; To lose his Crown at the Moment he thought to receive it : are Thoughts too dreadful to bear, and Bitter-

nesses of Soul beyond Description. What shall we say, when GOD leaves the Soul of his *Turtle Dove amongst Lions*; and seems to give up *his Darling to the Power of the Dog?*

Though Clouds and Darkness cover the Face of JEHOVAH'S Throne, Justice and Judgment inhabit there: He *does all Things well*. We have already hinted, that these Things may be for the Trial of Faith: perhaps not only of the Dying, but of those about him. I will venture to add yet further; perhaps for the greater Confusion of Satan, whose deceived Malice may think itself sure of its Prey; whose hellish Triumph may be, GOD *has forsaken him, persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him*.

"I see him again," cried CHRISTIAN, exulting, "and he tells me, *when thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers they shall not overflow thee*." The Enemy was after that as still as a Stone, till they were got over. He found there was one present, whom he hoped had been absent. *When GOD arises, his Enemies are scattered: they that hate him flee before him: as smoke is driven away, so does he drive them away: and as Wax melteth before the Fire, so do the Wicked perish at the Presence of*
GOD.

God: but the Righteous are glad and rejoice before him.

When the Disorder which brought NICANOR to his End, first siezed upon him, it took away all Hope of Recovery: *Terrors also took hold of him and overwelmed him like Waters*, and the Fear of Death harrowed up his Soul. NICANOR was of a tender Conscience, and timid Mind: he had passed through Life quietly practising the Duties of Religion, and strictly tenacious of whatever he believed to be right; but the low Thoughts he entertained of himself, would never permit him to join the Communion of Saints. As he talked but little about Religion, and especially of his own Experience; I know not whether his Soul had ever before his few last Days, been exercised with Terrors, and Fears of Wrath: he seemed to hold on an even steady Course, which left not, with Professors who knew him, the Shadow of a Doubt concerning the Goodness of his State.

His bodily Pain was excruciating, so dreadfully excruciating, that it was apparent it would destroy him in a short Time: but the Anguish of his Mind was past Description, and as he was sensible the
Acuteness

Acuteness of his Disorder, hastened on his End, his Terrors increased. He mourned, he wept, he lamented, that he was lost for ever—that he had been an Hypocrite all his Days—that he had deceived himself—and had stopped short of an Interest in CHRIST, therefore GOD had now left him to perish in his Sins. So lively were his Apprehensions of the Wrath to come, that when bodily Torture so wrung him that the Sweat fell in large Drops from his Face; he would cry, “This is nothing, terrible as it is, to the Hell I must suffer in another World.”

His Children he constantly admonished to take Warning by their unhappy Father, not to trifle with their Souls, but to make sure of an Interest in CHRIST: and to his Relations who visited him, he preached like a BOANERGES the Terrors of the LORD, and urged his own Experience as the awful Proof. He manifested the most lively Concern for all who came about him, lest they should fall into the same Condemnation, in which he considered himself; and never ceased urging the Importance of Friendship with GOD upon a dying Bed.

URIJAH,

URIJAH, who visited the departing CLIO, was the constant Attendant on the distressed NICANOR, whom he endeavoured to comfort and encourage, by setting before him the Mercy, Love, and Faithfulness of GOD to his Saints. NICANOR refused to be comforted! his Heart, he said, had never been right with GOD: whatever Hope he had formerly entertained, it was plain he had deceived himself.

When URIJAH saw from the Nature of NICANOR's Temptation, it was impossible to comfort him by referring to any Thing past, he changed his Method, and admitted that what NICANOR accused himself of might be true: he therefore preached the Gospel to him, as to one who had never known the LORD; and set before him the free Grace of GOD, and the Power and Willingness of the LORD JESUS, to save the Chief of Sinners, and that even at the eleventh Hour. NICANOR's Distress was not attended with a sullen gloomy Despair, but with ardent lively Desires after Salvation: he prayed incessantly for it, and intreated all who visited him to pray for him: he had therefore an Ear for the glad Tidings,
and

and they caught his Attention as an Object of Hope.

He continued to urge his Objections and Fears, lest the Salvation was not for him. One Day, URIJAH, wearied with fruitlessly answering Objections; addressed him with more than common Earnestness on the heinous Nature of the Sin of Unbelief, and closed his Address with that blessed Portion, *The Spirit and the Bride, say come: and let him that heareth say come: and whosoever will, let him come, and take of the Waters of Life freely.* NICANOR mused, changed Countenance, and was agitated: those present, supposed that one of his grievous Pains had seized him, and ran to support him: but what was their Surprise and Joy, when his Tongue found Utterance?

He broke out in rapturous Praise and Admiration, of the free Grace and dying Love of the LORD JESUS; and blamed himself for that Unbelief and Blindness, which had caused him to object to Mercy, which now shined into his Heart, clear as the Light of Day. He called upon all about him to join with him in praising the LORD, and continued to his Death, which was but a few Days after, speaking of

of JESUS, to all who came to him; exhorting them to believe on the precious SAVIOUR; "for I," said he, "have obtained Mercy." The Enemy made two or three Efforts to involve his Soul in Darkness again; but his gracious LORD stood by, and delivered him. An excruciating Pang at last, put an End to his Sufferings, and removed him beyond the Reach of Trouble.

Return with me, SYNTYCHE, to the Banks of the River. Our holy Pilgrims are safely landed on the Side next the HOLY CITY. The ministering Spirits receive them with Gladness; and having left their mortal Incumbrances in the River, they ascend with Agility through the Regions of the Air, sweetly talking with their heavenly Companions, of the Glory of the KING, to whom, and the Happiness of the Place to which they are going.

These, my dear Friend, are the Beginnings of those *Things which Eye hath not seen, nor the Ear fully heard, nor the Heart conceived*: but, *which God hath prepared for those that love him*. Shall disembodied Saints alone enjoy such Conversation? With Angels thus to converse, is indeed their special Privilege: but why shall not Saints converse

verse together on the same Subjects, and make them a Song for the House of their Pilgrimage?

- “ Heav’n is that holy, happy Place,
- “ Where Sin no more defiles ;
- “ Where God unveils his blisful Face,
- “ And looks, and loves, and Smiles.

- “ Where JESUS, SON OF MAN, and GOD,
- “ Triumphant from his Wars,
- “ Walks in rich Garments dipp’d in Blood,
- “ And shews his glorious Scars.

- “ Where ransom’d Sinners found God’s Praise.
- “ Th’ angelic Hosts among :
- “ Sing the rich Wonders of his Grace :
- “ And JESUS leads the Song.”

What a Welcome do the Pilgrims receive from the shining Hosts which come out to meet them? With what Triumph are they escorted towards the City of the GREAT KING? Thus was the Beggar LAZARUS, who on Earth found more Kindness from Dogs than Men, thus, we are told, was he carried by Angels to ABRAHAM’S BOSOM. Thus shall it be done to the Man whom the KING delights to Honour :

nour: for this Honour have all his Saints. Glows not thy Heart, my Friend, at the Idea? Say to the Children of Pride, Ye may despise me, and pass me here with Scorn, and even *disdain to set me with the Dogs of your Flocks*: Say to the Children of Self-Righteousness, who cry, *Stand by, for I am holier than thou*; Mock on; and say; *Let the LORD be glorified: for he shall appear to my Joy, and ye shall be ashamed. For the LORD will comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste Places, he will make her Wilderness like Eden, and her Desert like the Garden of the LORD. Joy and Gladness shall be found therein, Thanksgiving and the Voice of Melody.*

See, my SYNTYCHE, the Men are at the Gate of the City, and reading the Inscription over it. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the Gates into the City.*

“ Those holy Gates for ever bar

“ Pollution, Sin, and Shame:

“ None, shall obtain Admittance there,

“ But Follow’rs of the Lamb.”

See

See, my Friend, the Men call at the Gate, and are answered—they deliver in their CERTIFICATES, the Proofs of that *Faith that worketh by Love*: that Faith, whose Principle, Object, and Fruit, has been the same under every Dispensation, whether PATRIARCHAL, MOSAIC, PROPHETIC, or EVANGELICAL. Their CERTIFICATES are carried to the KING, who recognises his own Seal, wherewith his Servants were *sealed unto eternal Redemption*. He commands to open the Gate, "*that the righteous Nation,*" said he, "*that keepeth the Truth may enter in.*"

Behold, SYNTYCHE, the Pilgrims enter: they are transfigured to the Likeness of the Celestial Glory: as Kings and Priests unto God, they have Crowns on their Heads, and Harps in their Hands, and their Garments shine like the Sun. Never did they so sing in their most joyful Days of Pilgrimage as now. "*Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever.*"

Let us, with the holy Dreamer, look in after them. Blessed God! what a ravishing Sight! The City shines like the Sun,
and

and the Streets are paved with Gold:—the blessed Inhabitants are all crowned, all bear Palms as *Conquerors through the Blood of the Lamb*: and all have Harps to praise him. Hark! how the burning Seraphim cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD*! Well might the good Man wish himself among them.

Of IGNORANCE, we have already largely spoken, and anticipated his Catastrophe: let us leave him then at the Door in the Side of the Hill, and be careful we do not follow him; but *be Followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.*

What must we do to follow them? As Clouds of Witnesses, they all bear Testimony; that we must *lay aside every Weight, AND THE SIN THAT DOTTH MOST EASILY BESET US. We must run with Patience the Race which is set before us, looking to JESUS, the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our Faith.*

“ Prince of Peace, and LORD of Life,

“ Give us agonizing Strife;

“ Life divine in us renew,

“ Thou, the Gift and Giver too.”

Had

Had we only to consider our own Sufficiency, as opposed to the Greatness of the Conflict, we might well cry out, LORD, *who then can be saved?* But JESUS is *Alpha* and *Omega*; let us trust in him, whose Strength is made perfect in Weakness:— Though we have every Thing to discourage us in ourselves, we have every Thing to animate us in his Word. Courage then, my Brother: let us *press forward toward the Mark of the Prize of our high Calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. He, the Captain of our Salvation, was made perfect through Sufferings.*

“ By Faith we see the Glory,

“ To which he shall restore us;

“ The Cross despise, for that high Prize

“ Which he has set before us.

“ And if he count us Worthy,

“ We each as dying Stephen;

“ Shall see him stand, at God's right Hand,

“ To take us up to Heaven.”

Scarce can I entertain a Hope of seeing
my SYNTYCHE, till we meet there. Friend
of

of my Heart, and Brother of my Soul, may
neither of us be missing in the Kingdom
of God!

Grace, Mercy, and Peace, be with thee,
is the fervent and affectionate Prayer
of thy

ANDRONICUS.

F I N I S.

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